VERSAILLES
AND
THE COURT UNDER LOUIS XIV

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Versailles

And the Court under Louis XIV

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Louis XIV crowned by Victory

Versailles

And the Court under Louis XIV

By

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I

THE PALACE

VERSAILLES AND THE COURT UNDER LOUIS XIV

I

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE CHÂTEAU

TO portray the court of Louis XIV it is necessary to describe the Versailles of the seventeenth century, for though the Château of Versailles still stands, that which made it once the wonder of Europe is as dead as Nineveh.

On the 18th of April, 1651, the young Louis, accompanied by his governor, the Maréchal de Villeroi, and a numerous suite, paid his first visit to Versailles. He was then thirteen years of age, and had been king for eight years. He came to hunt in the woods, and dismounted after the chase to sup at the château [1] of his father, a building of moderate size, constructed on three sides of a court, with a pavilion at each corner, and surrounded by moats with stone balustrades. The site of that château and of its moats is now covered by the great central projection of Louis's palace. During the next ten years the king's liking for the place increased stead-

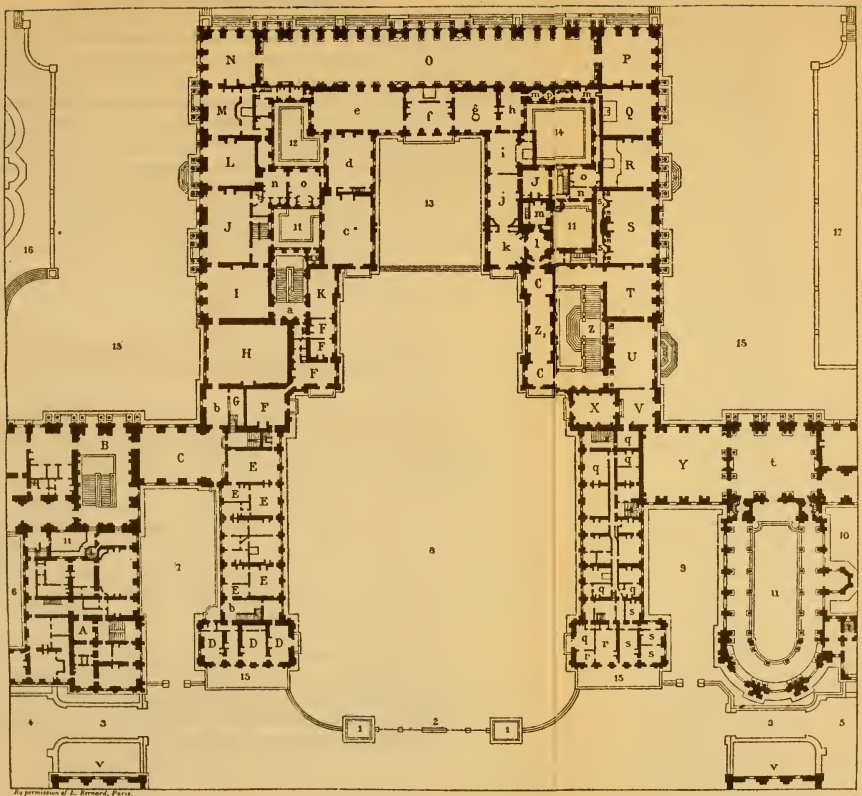
[1] The château built by Lemercier for Louis XIII, from 1624 to 1626.

ily, but though he came very frequently to Versailles to hunt, he did little in the way of building or embellishment until 1662. From 1662 to 1669 he adorned the park and gave magnificent fêtes there. In 1669 he decided to enlarge the château, but he was not to carry out his purpose without encountering opposition. Colbert was then superintendent of buildings as well as of finance, and Colbert's hobby was the Louvre. He set himself resolutely against the king's project, and did not hesitate to speak his mind. "Your Majesty knows," he wrote to the king, "that apart from brilliant actions in war nothing marks better the grandeur and genius of princes than their buildings, and that posterity measures them by the standard of the superb edifices which they erect during their lives. Oh, what a pity that the greatest king, and the most virtuous, should be measured by the standard of Versailles! And there is always this misfortune to fear." [1] But the king turned a deaf ear to the remonstrances of his minister. He had no intention of fixing himself in Paris. He had dreamed a dream, and meant to realize it at Versailles. Therefore he cut the matter short by a curt command, and Colbert was compelled to find the money.

Levau, first architect of the king, had been previously the architect of Fouquet, for whom he built the fine Château of Vaux, where Fouquet had spread himself in the sunshine and had given the king a fête which cost him dear.[2] To Levau the first works were intrusted, and he performed his task with a success worthy of his talent. As his orders commanded him to preserve the château of Louis XIII intact, he solved the difficulty by filling up the moats, and surrounding the château on three sides with new and splendid buildings: on the north, the state apartments of the king; on the west, two royal pavilions, each containing three salons, and joined to

[1] Lettres, Instructions et Mémoires de Colbert, V, p. 266.

[2] The famous fête at Vaux took place on August 17, 1661.



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15. Terraces
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Plan of the first floor of the Château of Versailles in the time of Louis XIV

each other by a grand terrace, paved with red-and-white marble; on the south, the state apartments of the queen. On the north and south two large courtyards, ornamented with fountains, separated these new buildings from the old château, whose western façade, though joined to the terrace and modified by it, was not destroyed. The architect, also, enlarged the old château on the east by uniting it to the two buildings on either side of the royal court, which dated from the time of Louis XIII, and in which that king had kept his horses and lodged his servants. Levau's work was well done, and he would doubtless have built the greater Versailles, that was to come, had he not died in 1670. He was succeeded by Mansart, who had made a success of his first work at Versailles, the Château of Clagny, built by the king's order for Madame de Montespan. Louis now made use of him to realize his dream, and for the next twelve years pushed on the works with might and main.

In the buildings of Levau an army of painters, sculptors, marble-cutters, and artists in bronze and copper were already engaged in decorating the state apartments, when the king conferred the office of first architect upon Mansart, with an order to build lodgings for the princes of the House of Bourbon. Mansart, therefore, erected the great south wing, between the Orangery and the Rue de la Surintendance (1679–1681), and joined it to the palace. In the same year, also, he began the grand gallery (1679–84), called now the Galerie des Glaces, which was raised on the terrace of Levau, between the two pavilions, completing the western façade of the central portion of the château. The great stables and the little stables (1679–82), on the Place d'Armes, called then the Place Royale, were commenced likewise, and in addition the Hôtel de la Surintendance, the Hôtel de la Chancellerie, the Trianon, and the Grand Commun were rising. There was, in fact, a furor of building at Versailles, for Louis was

in haste to inhabit his palace. Colbert, who had resigned himself to the inevitable, brought to the direction of all these new constructions the same zeal and energy that he displayed in the other branches of his administration. Each week he sent a note to the king, giving the progress made, and each week Louis visited the works that he might see with his own eyes how things were going, and caught a fever from the upturned earth for his pains.[1] "The king," wrote Madame de Sévigné, on the 12th of October, 1678, "wishes to go on Saturday to Versailles, but it seems that God does not wish it, by the impossibility of putting the buildings in a state to receive him, and by the great mortality among the workmen." Evidently there were others besides Louis who caught the fever, and who were less tenderly cared for. At last, despite impossibility and mortality, the king came on the 6th of May, 1682, with all his court, but 36,000 men and 6000 horses[2] were still at work on his palace and park of Versailles.[3]

[1] Leroi, Journal de la santé du Roi (Dussieux, Le Château de Versailles, I, p. 98).

[2] Dangeau (August 27, 1684): "Durant cette dernière semaine on dépensa pour Versailles 250,000 livres; il y avoit tous les jours 22,000 hommes et 6000 chevaux qui travailloient." Dangeau (May 31, 1685): "Par le calcul que l'on fait de tous les gens qui travaillent présentement ici ou aux environs pour Versailles, on trouve qu'il y en avoit plus de 36,000 travaillant actuellement."

[3] The list and the dates of erection of the chief buildings of the palace of Versailles and its dependencies are as follows: the château of Louis XIII (1624–26), the Menagerie (1663–65), the state apartments (1669–76), the Surintendance (1670), the first Trianon (1670), the Chancellerie (1673), the Château of Clagny (1676–83), the south wing (1679–81), the grand gallery (1679–84), the stables (1679–82), the Grand Commun (1682–85), the Orangery (1684–87), the north wing (1684–88), the chapel (1699–1710).

The Château of Versailles, from the Place d'Armes

II

THE COURTYARDS

THE palace presents a more imposing appearance when approached from the Avenue de Paris than when viewed directly from the Place d'Armes. The beautiful blue-and-gold railing of the courtyard, the work of Delobel and Luchet, bears the emblem of the Sun King, and was erected in 1680. At either end huge stone sentry-boxes support sculptured groups, representing Louis's victories over Austria and Spain, and above the main gate are the gilded arms of France, surmounted by a crown and flanked by the traditional horns of plenty. Through this gate no carriages passed save those of the king and of the princes of the blood. The nobility entered to the right, or to the left, by the gates which are now kept closed. Beyond rise the buildings of the palace, and before them, high up on his horse of bronze, sits the great king, pointing ever toward the town, which was built at his bidding. Where the pedestal of his statue[1] stands there was, in his day, the main gate of a second railing,[2] blue and gold like the first, which separated the court of the ministers, or court of honor, from the royal court; and since only the carriages of persons having the "honors of the Louvre" were permitted to drive into the royal court, people who did not enjoy that privilege were forced to alight in the court of the ministers. There they

[1] The equestrian statue of Louis XIV, erected by Louis Philippe in 1835.

[2] This railing was destroyed on the 6th of October, 1789.

could hire sedan-chairs to take them to the vestibules of the château, if they did not wish to walk. These chairs, called blue chairs, were carried by porters in blue liveries, who charged six sous for the service, and were owned and controlled by a company that had purchased the right.[1]

On the north and south sides of this first court stand the low red buildings in which the ministers and secretaries of state had their offices, a fact which gave the court its name, the court of the ministers. How many people of all ranks and conditions have gone up and down the stone steps of those buildings, hoping and fearing, to curry favor with the powerful custodians of the king's authority, who, according to Saint-Simon, were "accustomed to have almost everything their own way, to rule over everybody and browbeat everybody at will, fixing all punishments, all recompenses, and always sheltering themselves behind the royal authority, 'The king wills it so' being the phrase ever on their lips." [2] From those buildings, also, these lords of the portfolio set out in their coaches or their sedan-chairs on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays to attend the Council of State in the palace. The stone balustrades in front of the wings of the ministers were there in the days of Louis XIV, but the statues which adorn them are of a much later period.[3]

On turning toward the palace three objects strike the eye most prominently: to the right, the chapel, with its lofty roof, its statues, and its rich ornamentation; and in the foreground the Grecian fronts of the two pavilions at either side of the royal court. These pavilions differ from those erected under Louis XIV, for the buildings of Levau and Mansart were much changed on the side of the courtyards in the reign of Louis XV. The architect Gabriel, who was one of the

[1] Dussieux, I, p. 97.

[2] Saint-Simon, Memoirs of the Court of Louis XIV, II, p. 198.

[3] The statues were brought from the Pont de la Concorde in 1837.

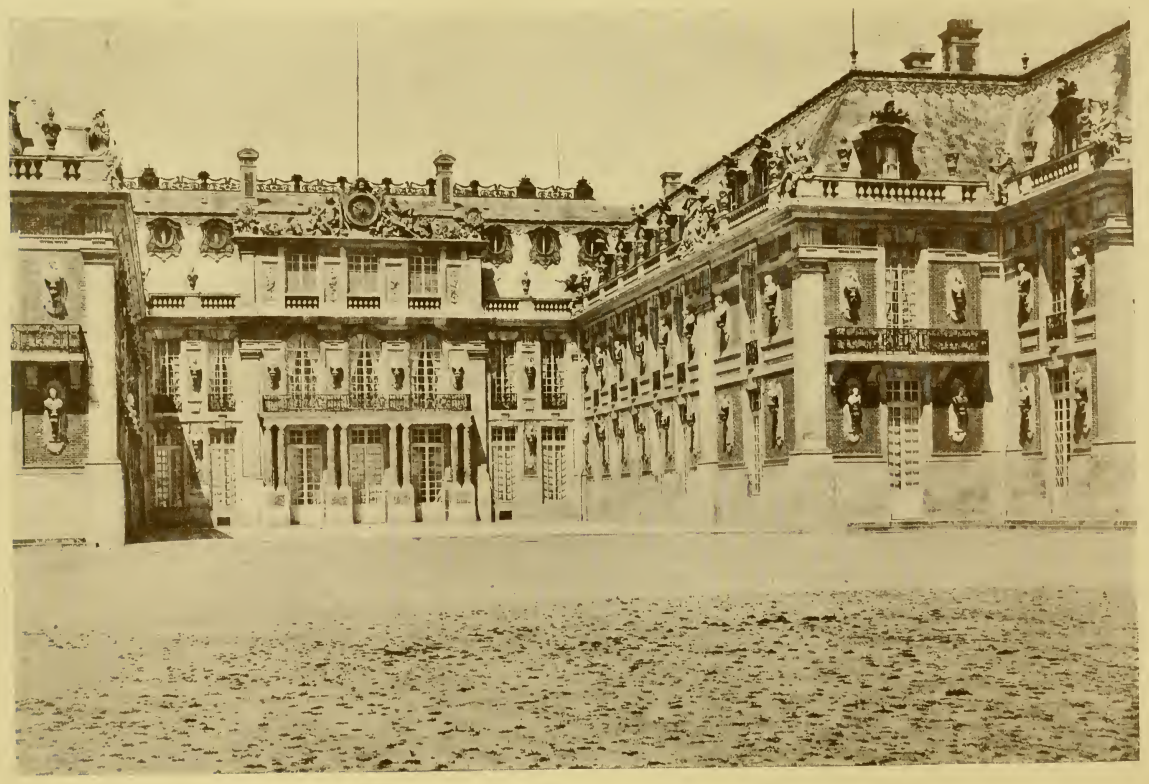
promoters of the restoration of the Greco-Roman art, destroyed the wing between the chapel and the royal court, which dated from Louis XIII, and raised the pavilion with the Grecian façade which we see to-day. The wing on the south side of the royal court, once the stables of Louis XIII, escaped destruction at that time, but was modified in 1820 by the erection at its extremity of a Grecian pavilion, corresponding to that of Gabriel on the north. Beyond this southern pavilion is the court of the princes, from which the handsome staircase of the princes leads to the apartments of the great south wing of the palace, where the princes of the blood were lodged. Finally there is the marble court in the center of the château; but before describing it, let us consider for a moment a subject which belongs properly to the larger courtyards, the royal court and the court of the ministers—namely, the king's body-guards and military household.

The king's person was protected by four companies of the body-guards, by twenty-five guards of the halberd, by the Cent-Suisses, by fifty guards of the gate, by the company of provost-guards, and by the hundred gentlemen of the battle-ax. Although at the first glance the number seems excessive, it must be borne in mind that they served in detachments by the quarter, and that Versailles is very large. There was also the military household, which was composed of cavalry and infantry. The cavalry consisted of four splendid companies of the body-guards, called the blue companies from the color of their uniforms, and also four companies of gendarmes and light horse, called the red companies; then came the gray musketeers and the black musketeers and the mounted grenadiers.[1] The infantry was made up of two regiments of French guards and Swiss guards. The king gave

[1] All these troops were uniformed in blue, white, or red, the colors of the Bourbons. Both companies of musketeers took their names from the color of their horses, and not from their uniforms.

much time and thought to the organization of his military household and was rigorous in matters of discipline. He reviewed his guards frequently at Versailles or Marly, and, with his well-known love of detail, inspected them man by man, and Dangeau tells us that in such inspections His Majesty was more severe than a commissary. In this work Louis was well seconded by Brissac, major of the body-guards. "The king made use of him," says Saint-Simon, "to put the guards upon that grand military footing they have reached."[1] On a grand military footing they certainly were, and the blue cavalry companies of the *Maison Militaire* were especially superb. But it was not only on days of review that the courtyards of Versailles were filled with the military household; the troops were there continually. "Four companies of the French guards and two of the Swiss guards parade every day in the court of the ministers between the two railings, and when the king issues in his carriage to go to Paris or to Fontainebleau the spectacle is magnificent. Four trumpeters in front and four behind, the Swiss guards on one side and the French guards on the other, form a line as far as it can reach. The Cent-Suisses march ahead of the horsemen in the costume of the sixteenth century, wearing the halberd, ruff, plumed hat, and the ample party-colored striped doublet; alongside of these are the provost-guards with scarlet facings and gold frogs, and companies of yeomanry, bristling with gold and silver. The officers of the various corps, the trumpeters and the musicians, covered with gold and silver lace, are dazzling to look at; the kettledrum suspended at the saddle-bow, overcharged with painted and gilded ornaments, is a curiosity for a glass case; the negro cymbal-player of the French guards resembles the sultan of a fairy-tale. Behind the carriage and alongside of it trot the body-guards, with sword and carbine, wearing red breeches,

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 13.



The Marble Court

high black boots, and blue coats laced with silver; all of them unquestionable gentlemen." [1] The courtyards, however, were rendered brilliant not only by military pomp but by fêtes as well, and in this connection we are brought to the marble court.

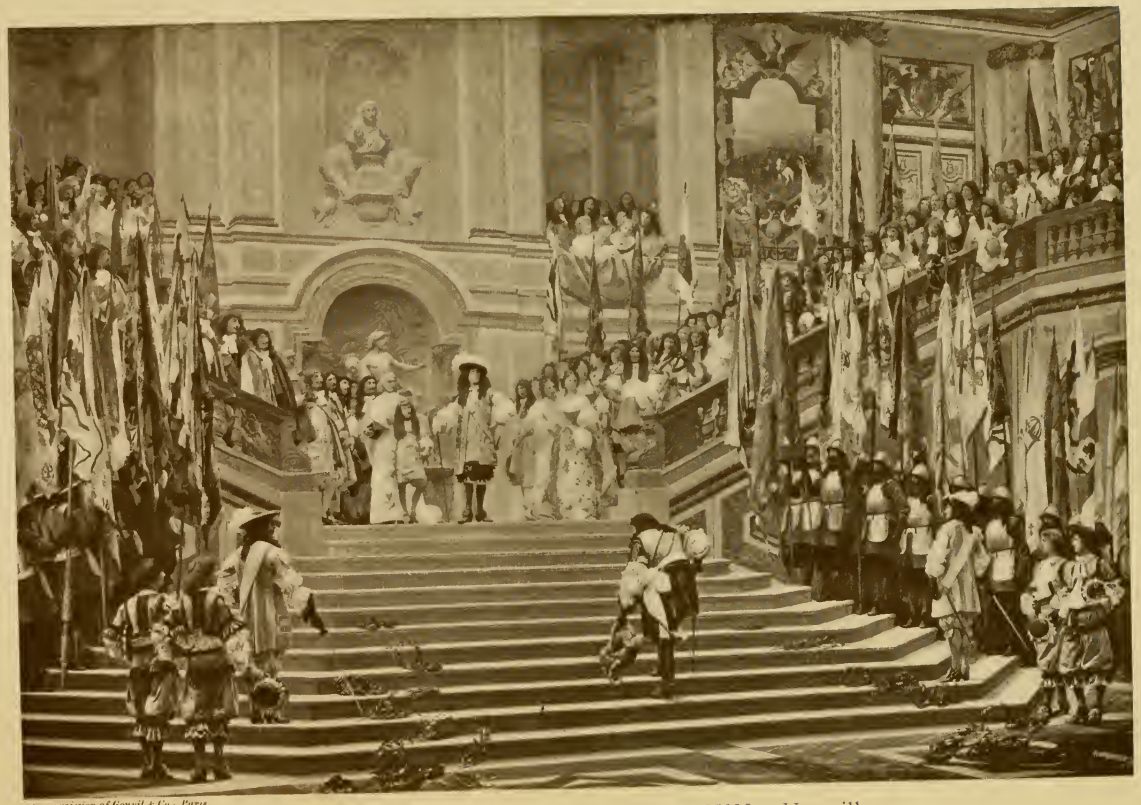
Here in the center of the château, where the windows of the Sun King's chamber face the rising sun, is that small courtyard, surrounded on three sides by the brick walls of Louis XIII's palace, which time has turned to a soft yellow, and which the Grand Monarch preserved carefully in the midst of his magnificence. There are marble busts on stone brackets between all the windows, and a wealth of ornamentation, sculptures and balustrades, about the roofs; but the chief interest and significance of this courtyard lies in the fact that behind its walls Louis lived and worked. The marble court is the center of Versailles; it was once the center of France, and the Grand Monarch sought to make it, and nearly succeeded in making it, the center of Europe. The western façade differs somewhat from the other two, for Louis was obliged to rebuild it in 1672, owing to the defective state of the wall. The windows of his bedchamber open on a large blue-and-gold balcony, the work of Delobel, which is held up by eight marble columns, and above the windows of the upper story rests a sculptured pediment, the great clock of the palace, supported by statues of Hercules and Mars. In 1673 the court contained a basin decorated with a group in gilded bronze which represented two Cupids embracing a Triton that held a horn from which a jet of water rose; but in 1684 Louis, who was changing his constructions continually, destroyed the fountain and paved the court with black-and-white marble as one sees it now. This pavement is several inches higher than the stone pavement of the royal court, but no horses or carriages entered here. The king took his car-

[1] Taine, The Ancient Régime, p. 92.

riage in the royal court. The marble court was used more than once as an open-air theater, and a print by Lepautre exists, representing a performance of Molière's "Alceste" as given here before the king and the courtiers. On that occasion no scenery was used; the balconies and roofs of the château were brilliantly illuminated, and on either side of the court they placed a row of orange-trees in silver tubs, but nothing further seems to have been done to deck a stage already highly adorned.

The final touch of brilliancy was given to the courtyards by the nobility as they came and went. "The king," says Saint-Simon, "liked splendor, magnificence, and profusion in everything: you pleased him if you shone through the brilliancy of your houses, your clothes, your table, your equipages." [1] Such being the case, there were many who pleased, and the courtyards of Versailles were filled with glittering liveries, with splendid horses, with gilded carriages—in short, with a blaze of color and pomp that changed continually and whirled to and from Paris and St. Cloud.

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 369.



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The Reception of the Great Condé by Louis XIV at Versailles

III

THE AMBASSADORS' STAIRCASE

BEGUN in 1671 and finished in 1680, this staircase was sometimes called the grand staircase, but more frequently the ambassadors' staircase because it was specially intended for the ambassadors of foreign courts when they came in state to receive their audiences from the king. The three arches to the right of the royal court led to the vestibule; they contain now very simple doors of wood and glass, but in Louis's day they held splendid gates of gilded iron, forged by Delobel.[1] The vestibule was paved with the finest marbles, and the vaulting enriched with trophies in gilded bronze. The ambassador who entered passed under one of three other arches and found himself in a gorgeous hall that rose to the roof of the palace. There before him, gleaming with colored marbles, mounting majestically to right and to left, was the chef-d'œuvre of Dorbay and of Levau, the staircase of the Grand Monarch. Twelve marble steps in the center led to the first landing, where in a niche there was a fountain, ornamented with a group in gilded bronze. Above the fountain, in a second niche, was a bust of Louis in white marble, placed in the midst of trophies, and at either side of it, between marble columns, people of different nations, silent, immovable, lifelike, glittering in varied costumes, looked out over railings covered with cloth of gold, as one might look from an opera-box. In such

[1] Dussieux, Le Château de Versailles, I, p. 299.

fashion the fact was brought home to an ambassador that the eyes of the world were on him when he went up to face the King of France. The two stairs, to the right and the left, of twenty-one steps each, were of marble with marble balustrades, and from the upper landings very beautiful doors, carved and gilded, the work of Caffieri, led to the state apartments. As for the rest, there were four superb tapestries on the walls, copies of Van der Meulen's paintings of the taking of Valenciennes, of Cambrai, of St. Omer, and of the battle of Cassel; and Lebrun's ceiling, a gorgeous composition in which the Arts, the Sciences, the Muses, and the Virtues stood at the doors of the king's house to welcome him. But all this magnificence has disappeared. Louis XV, who had no appreciation of art or grandeur, very foolishly destroyed the ambassadors' staircase, in 1752, to enlarge his private apartments and those of his daughters. Gérôme, in his painting, "The Reception of the Great Condé by Louis XIV," has reproduced the grand staircase and filled it with the court, and that canvas brings vividly before one the vanished splendor of Versailles.

The staircase served not only for ambassadors on days of ceremony, but concerts were frequently given there, and at times certain religious services were held there. Dangeau tells us that on the 22d of June, 1684, there was a concert on the staircase, and the *Mercure* adds: "When it is full of light the grand staircase of the king vies in magnificence with the richest apartments of the most beautiful palace in the world."[1] Again, under date of April 12, 1699, we find the following: "The king came down below at chapel, at twelve o'clock, and as the weather was bad he did not go to the station to which he had gone the year before in crossing the court. They had placed the cross on the landing of the grand staircase. The

[1] Dussieux, I, p. 301.

king, Monseigneur, Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne, Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, Mgr. le Duc d'Anjou, Mgr. le Duc de Berry, went to adore the cross. The grand staircase was full of courtiers on both sides. The spectacle was very beautiful." [1]

[1] Dangeau, April, 1699.

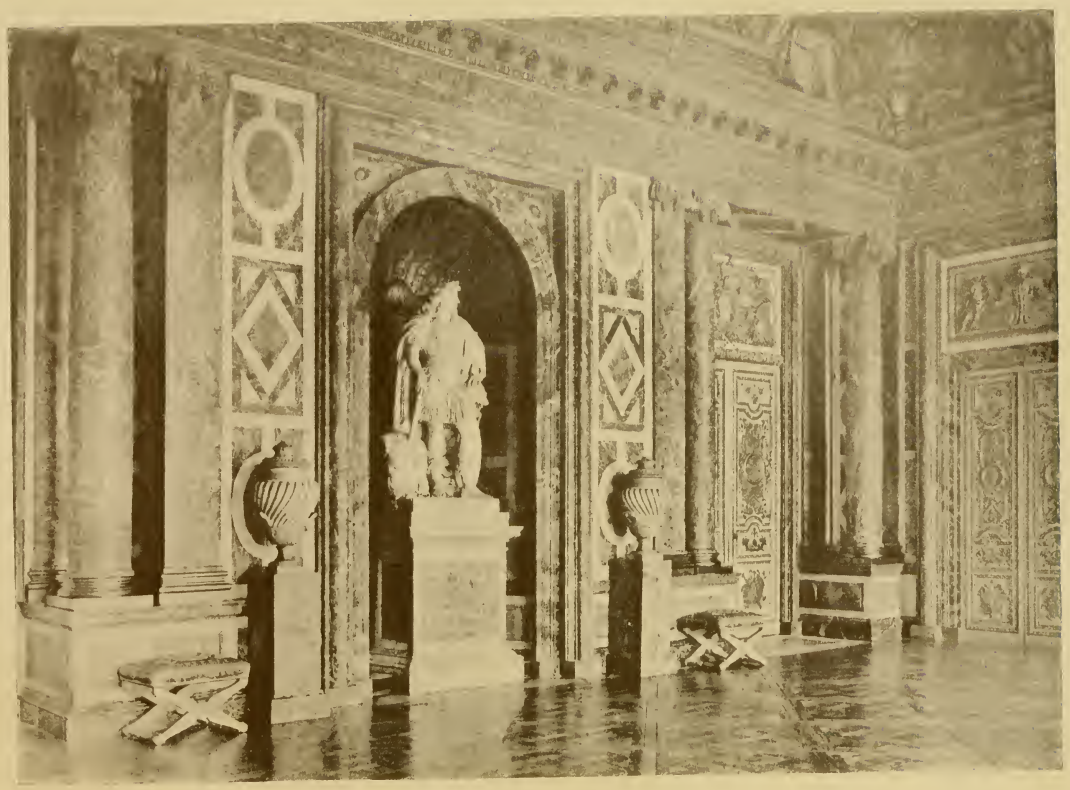
IV

THE STATE APARTMENTS OF THE KING

AT the present time the state apartments begin with the salon of Hercules, but in Louis XIV's day that salon did not exist, and its site was occupied by the chapel of the château. The small salon of Abundance, which opens out of the salon of Hercules, was once the vestibule of that chapel, and therefore these two salons may be omitted from the description of the state apartments, which began originally with the salon of Venus, and were composed of the following rooms: the salons of Venus, of Diana, of Mars, of Mercury, of Apollo, of War, the grand gallery, the salon of Peace.[1] The first six form the north side of the central projection of the palace, and their lofty windows look out on the parterre du Nord; but as the salon of War, which opens into the grand gallery, belongs properly to the chapter devoted to that subject, let us consider now only the first five, named after the gods and goddesses of the old world, who figure here as satellites of the god of Versailles, Louis the Sun King.

If Louis could revisit Versailles to-day, and beginning his tour of inspection in the salon of Hercules, turn in on the right, where a small sign, by no means artistic, announces the entrance to *Les Grands Appartements de Louis XIV*, he would undoubtedly be surprised and shocked, and look vainly for his vanished magnificence. So much has been changed

[1] Dussieux, I, p. 142.



The Salon of Venus

and cheapened, and yet in view of the way in which the Revolution ransacked the palace it is surprising that so much remains. But it was precisely that vanished magnificence which made the court what it was, and some notion of it is essential in any attempt to portray the court.

THE SALON OF VENUS

The salon of Venus opened originally upon the ambassadors' staircase, and was therefore the first room of the state apartments. It is paneled throughout with marble, arranged in mosaic form, and so perfectly fitted that the joints have not changed after two centuries.[1] On the ceiling Houasse has painted in charming color Venus crowned by the Graces, and this central composition is surrounded by four other pictures, in which Augustus, Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander, and Cyrus figure. Augustus is presiding over the games of the circus, Nebuchadnezzar is raising the gardens of Babylon, Cyrus is reviewing his army, etc.; but the courtiers understood perfectly that these were but symbols of their Sun King, who had held his tournament in the Carrousel, who had constructed his gardens of Versailles, who had ridden rough-shod through Flanders, and on whatever gorgeous ceiling of this palace they saw Augustus, Alexander, Cæsar, or Cyrus, they read Louis. There in a niche Louis stands in white marble, clad as a Roman emperor, and that statue, which is the work of Varin, occupied the same position in Louis's day. The salon was lighted by two large chandeliers of silver and cut glass and by eight tall branched candlesticks of crystal which stood on gilded pedestals, while the furniture and curtains were of green velvet bordered with gold. All that has disappeared. On the evenings when an *appartement* was held, that is, a gathering of all the court, this salon was used for the

[1] Dussieux, I, p. 146.

collation. Tables were spread here, covered with silver candlesticks and pyramids of flowers, and loaded with fruits and dainties of every sort. People came and helped themselves as they pleased; to use the expression current at court, they "pillaged."

THE SALON OF DIANA

This room, like the one preceding, is paneled with marble, and ornamented with bas-reliefs in copper, carved and gilded. On the ceiling Blanchard has painted Diana and her Nymphs, and again we see Cyrus and Alexander, the one pursuing a stag, and the other a lion. In the center of the wall opposite the windows there is a bust of Louis by Bernin, on a pedestal decked with bas-reliefs in bronze. Above the fireplace, where the portrait of Marie Thérèse now hangs, there was once a painting of Iphigenia and Diana, while on the other wall, where is seen now the portrait of Louis XIV by Rigaud, a copy of the original in the Louvre, hung a picture representing Diana and Endymion. Under the portrait of the king, stands one of the rare pieces of furniture of the time of Louis XIV which remain at Versailles, a beautiful table of carved wood, gilded, with a marble top, a product of the Gobelins. This salon of Diana was the billiard-room, and its furniture and curtains were formerly of crimson velvet bordered with gold. It was lighted by four large chandeliers of silver and glass, while four smaller chandeliers on gilded pedestals were placed at the corners of the billiard-table. Beyond that table two rows of raised seats, covered with Persian tapestry, and brilliantly lighted by silver candlesticks of many branches placed at the sides, allowed the court ladies to watch the players with ease, and to display themselves to great advantage at the same time. Here were seen, too, the orange-trees of which the king was so fond. There were four of them, each

in a beautifully carved tub of silver. Such was Diana's salon in its prime.

THE SALON OF MARS

The salon of Mars was the ball-room and concert-hall, and originally had marble tribunes for the musicians on either side of the chimney. On the ceiling the god of battles rides in his triumphal car, Cæsar reviews his soldiers, Cyrus and Marcus Aurelius advance, Constantine marches to war. These paintings are the work of Audran, Houasse, and Jouvenet. In this salon green was the prevailing color, the furniture and curtains being of green velvet bordered with gold, and silver was lavishly used. Between the windows stood tables of silver, beautifully carved, holding splendid silver baskets full of flowers, silver candlesticks, and silver punch-bowls highly wrought. There were three large mirrors above the tables, set in carved silver frames, and from the brilliant ceiling hung two huge chandeliers of silver and cut glass. There were also a number of small card-tables, covered with green velvet fringed with gold, and in the center a larger table which held a *trou-madame* of inlaid work. *Trou-madame*, for a time a popular game at court, was played by rolling little ivory balls through arcades into holes marked with certain numbers.[1] Thus with its wealth of color and light the salon of Mars must have presented a striking picture when the card-tables were crowded with courtiers, or when, after the tables had vanished, the music sounded from the marble tribunes for the dance.

THE SALON OF MERCURY

The salon of Mercury has preserved its original decoration, which is all of marble; the fireplace alone has been destroyed.

[1] An account of the various games of cards played at court will be given later, when the subject of gambling is considered.

Champagne's ceiling represents Mercury in a chariot drawn by two cocks, and in the smaller paintings Augustus and Alexander are seen again. This was the state bedchamber, and Louis slept here in the early days of his residence at Versailles, probably from 1676 to 1685, after which time it remained a chamber of parade. When the Duc d'Anjou was proclaimed King of Spain in 1700, Louis installed his grandson in this bedchamber that people might come to pay their court to him as King Philippe V before he set out for Spain. The furniture and hangings were of crimson velvet fringed with gold, and the bed, which stood on an estrade facing the windows, was surmounted by a canopy of cloth of gold, adorned with red and white plumes. Before the bed was a balustrade of silver,[1] which held at intervals eight tall branched candlesticks of the same metal. There were silver tables between the windows, mirrors framed in silver, beautiful inlaid cabinets with statuettes in silver and bronze, a splendid chandelier of silver and glass of six branches holding eighteen candles, and flowers everywhere. Here, too, were the card-tables of the king and queen, but at an *appartement* they frequently went to play in the salon of Mars.

THE SALON OF APOLLO

The salon of Apollo was the throne-room, and here the ambassador who had ascended the grand staircase and passed through the glittering halls of Venus, of Diana, of Mars, and of Mercury, found himself in the presence of the King of France, and if he was not sufficiently impressed by all that he had seen from the time he left his carriage, Louis's glance and bearing would make up the deficiency. The colors here were crimson and gold. An estrade faced the windows, cov-

[1] The balustrade of silver was the work of Loir and Villiers. It cost 142,196 livres (Comptes des Batiments de 1680). Dussieux, I, p. 152.

Charles Lebrun

ered with a rich Persian carpet on which stood the silver throne, eight feet high, of beautiful workmanship, and surmounted by a splendid canopy. The three gilded rings which held the canopy may still be seen in the ceiling; they have outlived the throne. On the ceiling, in an admirable composition by Delafosse, Apollo appears, surrounded by the Seasons and the Months, while in the smaller paintings are the ever-present Alexander and Augustus. On the walls were pictures by Rubens, by Titian, by Guido, and by Van Dyck, six of which are now at the Louvre.[1] Here, as elsewhere, there were costly tables and mirrors, chandeliers of silver, the most perfect that French art could produce, orange-trees in silver tubs, and flowers everywhere.

Such were the first five of the king's state apartments, which open one into another in the order given. At one time they were all paved with marble, but when the floors were washed it was found impossible to prevent water from passing through the cracks and injuring the ceilings of the rooms below, and Louis, therefore, substituted floors of polished wood. These five salons, beautiful as they were, were surpassed by the three which followed, for Mansart and Lebrun had reserved the final splendors for the grand gallery and the salons of War and of Peace.

[1] Dussieux, I, p. 153.

V

THE GRAND GALLERY AND ITS SALONS

THE salon of War, the grand gallery, called frequently the Galerie des Glaces, and the salon of Peace occupy the entire façade of the central portion of the château on the garden side, and form a setting of unrivaled splendor for ceremonies and fêtes. "He had the air of a great king," said Montesquieu of Louis XIV, and these apartments are the solid, visible presentment of that majesty. Mars, Mercury, and Apollo have had their day; here there is no god but Louis, dominant and triumphant.

THE SALON OF WAR

The ceiling of the salon of War, painted by Lebrun at the time of Louis's brilliant successes, represents France aloft on the clouds and surrounded by Victories bearing laurel wreaths; in the curves of the arch are seen Germany, Holland, and Spain, vanquished by the men of valor who fought for the Sun King. There on the chimney, in a large bas-relief of white stucco, rides Louis himself, clad as a Roman, with his enemies under the heels of his horse, and attended by Victory, Valor, and Renown. This is the work of Coyzevox. The walls of the salon are entirely of marble, richly adorned with trophies in gilded copper. In Louis's day there were in the four corners of the room beautiful tables of blue and gold, holding massive vases of silver, and between the windows

silver candlesticks of many branches. A huge chandelier of silver and glass hung in the center of the apartment, while at the sides of the room stood then, as now, six busts of the Roman emperors, which had been given to Louis by Mazarin. But the salon of War serves only as a brilliant vestibule to the grand gallery. A lofty arch connects the salon with that glittering hall where the Sun King's splendor reached its zenith.

THE GRAND GALLERY

The grand gallery is the epitome of absolutism and divine right and the grandeur of the House of Bourbon. It rests upon the former terrace of Levau and extends from the salon of War to the salon of Peace, a distance of two hundred and forty feet. Its seventeen lofty windows look out upon the gardens, and are reflected in the seventeen arches filled with mirrors which line the opposite wall. The trophies in gilded copper, and the decorations of the Corinthian pilasters between every mirror and every window, are the work of Coyzevox, Tuby, and Caffieri. Here, as elsewhere, the walls are of marble, and the cornice, carved in great part by Coyzevox, is adorned with the crown of France and the collars of Saint-Esprit and Saint-Michel. The ceiling, which gave Lebrun four years' labor (1679–82), is his chief work at Versailles, and the artist sought with all his skill and all the wealth of color at his command to place above the head of the Louis who walked daily through this gallery, sometimes gay and sometimes sad, sometimes suffering and sometimes buoyant, the glory and omnipotence of that ideal Louis, the Sun King, whom all the Arts united to celebrate. The man on the floor and the god on the ceiling were two very different persons, but it is to the credit of the actual Louis that, whether his ideal was true or false, he had an ideal and endeavored to live

up to it. On the ceiling he is young and victorious and crowned with laurel, crossing the Rhine, conquering Holland, capturing Ghent, seizing Franche-Comté, governing by himself, and, with all France applauding him and all Europe fearing him, making a noise in the world. There are thirty of these paintings, eight of large size and twenty-two smaller ones, surrounded by rich borders of gilded sculptures, and intended to convey to posterity the story of the Sun King from 1671 to 1678, as composed by Louis and Lebrun. Here in this grand gallery Louis attained his apotheosis, but he owed it to Mansart, Lebrun, Coyzevox, Tuby, and Caffieri, who put their hearts into their work. To-day, stripped of all its furniture with the exception of a few white benches covered with red cloth, the grand gallery is still imposing and magnificent, but at one period the furniture was as splendid as the decoration, and for the most part was of massive carved silver or of silver-gilt. In two long lines on either side, between the windows and the mirrors, were placed tables of silver, candelabra of silver, vases of silver and gold, benches of silver covered with green velvet fringed with gold, orange-trees in bloom in beautifully carved tubs of silver—in short, a mass of riches. The floor was covered with two gorgeous carpets of the Savonnerie, and the windows were hung with curtains of white damask embroidered in gold with the royal arms.[1] Sixteen huge chandeliers of silver, with decorations representing the labors of Hercules,[2] the Seasons and the Months, and twelve large lusters of crystal and silver furnished the illumination, and at an *appartement* the gallery was lighted by four thousand wax candles. On such a night, when this great hall was crowded with the court, the *coup d'œil* must have been royal.

[1] These curtains cost 1050 livres each. Comptes des Bâtiments, 1684.

[2] Twelve chandeliers, representing the labors of Hercules, cost 31,153 livres. Dussieux, I, p. 161.

The Grand Gallery

But the day came when Louis found Europe in arms against him. He was no longer young, nor victorious, nor crowned with laurel, and to keep his four hundred and fifty thousand men in arms and his navy in condition to combat Holland and England, he was forced to ask his nobles to loan him their silver and gold, their tables, their mirrors, their riches of every sort. To set the example himself, he sent, in 1690, nearly two thousand pieces of his silver furniture to the mint;[1] and when he did this thing, above his head, clad as a Roman and crowned with laurel, was that ideal Sun King, whom all the Arts united to celebrate, and who was never troubled by financial difficulties.

THE SALON OF PEACE

The salon of Peace, constructed at the same time as the salon of War and the grand gallery, has preserved its original decoration. Its walls are lined with marble, ornamented with trophies in gilded copper and with mirrors. On the ceiling, which is the work of Lebrun, France rides in a chariot, attended by Peace and Abundance. Lemoine's painting on the chimney, which represents Louis XV giving peace to Europe, was not placed there until 1729; what the previous adornment of the chimney was is difficult to discover, but without question it was brilliant and appropriate. Here also on pedestals of colored marble are six busts of the Cæsars, which, like those in the salon of War, Louis XIV had received from Mazarin. In this salon the silver throne was placed in 1685, when Louis gave audience to the Doge of Genoa. The state apartments of the king end with the salon of Peace, from which a door to the right of the chimney leads to the state apartments of the queen.

[1] The silver furniture was replaced by furniture of carved and gilded wood, and tables adorned with marble mosaics and borders of carved copper. Dussieux, I, p. 164.

VI

THE STATE APARTMENTS OF THE QUEEN

THESE apartments have been occupied successively by six women: Queen Marie Thérèse, the wife of Louis XIV; the Dauphine of Bavaria, the wife of Monseigneur; the Duchesse de Bourgogne; the Infanta of Spain, the fiancée of Louis XV from 1722 to 1725, when the projected marriage was broken off; Queen Marie Leczinska; and finally Queen Marie Antoinette. Queen Marie Thérèse was an insignificant figure in the brilliant court of her husband, being completely eclipsed by the Marquise de Montespan, nor did she long enjoy her new apartments at Versailles. They were ready for her in 1676, and she died in 1683.

THE QUEEN'S BEDCHAMBER

In this room two queens and two dauphines have died, and nineteen children of France have been born. The original decoration has entirely disappeared; modified by Louis XV for Marie Leczinska, it was completely changed in 1770 for Marie Antoinette, and in turn the decorations made for Marie Antoinette were destroyed by the architects of Louis Philippe to make space for the large paintings with which the walls are now covered. The ceiling with its gilded sculptures dates from the time of Marie Antoinette. The original ceiling was painted by Gilbert de Sève. In Louis XIV's day there stood before the queen's bed a splendid balustrade

of silver, like that in the salon of Mercury, but when the king sent his silver furniture to the mint this balustrade was replaced by one of carved and gilded wood. The apartment of Marie Thérèse was paneled with marble, and in winter hung with rich tapestries. The bed stood on an estrade, facing the windows, under a lofty plumed canopy, and the furniture was blue and gold. The Duchesse de Bourgogne, when she lived here as dauphine, added several beautiful cabinets which contained her jewels and a part of the crown diamonds. The large pier-glass in its gilded frame between the windows dates from the time of Marie Antoinette, and the tragedy of her life has made her souvenirs supreme in this spot, to the exclusion of all else. It is as difficult to dissociate this apartment from Marie Antoinette, and associate it with Marie Thérèse, as it is to discover what its decorations and furnishings were in the time of that simple and insignificant woman. But as those decorations and furnishings were ordered, not by her simple self, but by her magnificent husband, it may be safely asserted that the bedchamber of Marie Thérèse was worthy of a Queen of France.

THE GRAND CABINET OF THE QUEEN

The queen's state apartments occupy the south side of the central projection of the château, facing the *parterre du Midi,* and enjoy a wealth of sunshine which the state apartments of the king, on the north side, lack. Yet there was not much sunshine in the life of Marie Thérèse. In her grand cabinet, which opens out of her bedchamber, she held her receptions, and people were presented to her. With the exception of the ceiling, painted by Michel Corneille and representing Mercury surrounded by the Arts and Sciences, nearly all the original decorations of the apartment have been changed. When the queen gave audience, her chair was placed at the

end of the room on an estrade under a canopy; but she died so soon after Louis had made this palace the seat of his government that she plays almost no part in the court of Versailles.

In those piquant memoirs of the regent's mother there is this portrait of Marie Thérèse, somewhat exaggerated no doubt: "Our queen was excessively ignorant, but the kindest and most virtuous woman in the world. She believed everything the king told her, good or bad. Her teeth were very ugly, being black and broken. It is said that this proceeded from her being in the constant habit of taking chocolate; she also frequently ate garlic. She was short and fat, and her skin was very white. When she was not walking or dancing, she seemed much taller. She ate frequently and for a long time; but her food was always cut in pieces as small as if they were for a singing bird. She could not forget her country, and her manners were always remarkably Spanish. She was very fond of play; she played basset, reversis, ombre, and sometimes a little primero; but she never won because she did not know how to play. She had such an affection for the king that she used to watch his eyes to do whatever might be agreeable to him; if he only looked at her kindly she was in good spirits for the rest of the day. She was very glad when the king quitted his mistresses for her, and displayed so much satisfaction that it was commonly remarked. She had no objection to being joked upon this subject, and upon such occasions used to laugh and wink and rub her little hands. . . . The king, nevertheless, had always great consideration for her, and made his mistresses treat her with all becoming respect. He loved her for her virtue, and for the sincere affection she bore to him, notwithstanding his infidelity. He was much affected at her death. . . . The queen died of an abscess under her arm. Instead of making it burst, Fagon, who was unfortunately then her physician,

By permission of Brown, Clement & Co.

Marie Thérèse, Queen of France

had her blooded; this drove in the abscess, the disorder attacked her internally, and an emetic, which was administered after her bleeding, had the effect of killing the queen." [1]

The body of Marie Thérèse lay in state in this salon, and in the *Gazette* we find the official ceremony in detail: "On the 31st of July the corpse of the queen was opened and embalmed, and they took from it the heart and the entrails. The heart was embalmed and inclosed in a silver case upon which was this inscription: *This is the heart of Marie Thérèse, Infanta of Spain, wife of Louis le Grand, XIV of the name; she died on the 30th of July, 1683.* The entrails were also embalmed and placed in an urn. The body, after having been embalmed and clad in the dress of St. François by the queen's women, was laid in a leaden coffin, on which they placed this inscription: *This is the body of the very high, very excellent, and very powerful princess, Marie Thérèse, Infanta of Spain, wife of Louis le Grand, XIV of the name; she died at the Château of Versailles on Friday, the 30th of July, 1683, at the age of forty-five years.* They carried the coffin into the grand cabinet, which was hung from top to bottom with black velvet, adorned with the queen's coat of arms; and while the priests of the Mission established in the parish of Versailles, the Feuillants and Récollets, chanted the *De profundis,* they placed it on an estrade, raised two steps, under a dais of black velvet, fringed with silver, and ornamented with the arms of the queen. The coffin was covered with a royal mantle trimmed with ermine, upon which was placed a crown of gold, half hidden by crape. The silver case containing the heart was brought into the same cabinet and laid upon one of the two altars which had been prepared for the celebration of the mass. About the estrade and on the altars were a large number of silver chandeliers filled with lighted wax tapers. The queen's bed-

[1] Memoirs of Elizabeth-Charlotte, Duchesse d'Orléans, pp. 103–104.

chamber, her antechamber, the hall of her guards, and the marble staircase were also hung with black velvet, ornamented with her coat of arms. Four bishops, who came every day to assist at the prayers, were placed at the right of the body; and above them were the four almoners of the queen. The Marquise de Montespan, superintendent of the queen's household, the Duchesse de Créqui, *dame d'honneur,* the Comtesse de Béthune, *dame d'atour,* and the ladies of the palace were placed at the left; they were relieved every two hours by the duchesses and by the other ladies who had been invited. Two heralds at arms in black robes, with their coats of arms and their wands of office, were at the foot of the estrade. They presented the holy-water brush to the princes, princesses, dukes, duchesses, marshals of France, officers of the crown, ladies of the palace, and the other ladies, who came to sprinkle the holy water on the coffin at the appointed hours.

"On the 1st of August, Monsieur, Madame, Mademoiselle, the Prince de Condé, the Duc d'Enghien, the Prince de la Roche-sur-Yon, and the Comte de Vermandois [1] came in the morning to sprinkle the holy water; and after dinner the Grand Duchesse de Toscane, the Duchesse d'Enghien, the Princesse de Conti, and Mlle. de Bourbon performed the same duty.

"On the evening of the 2d of August the heart was carried to Val-de-Grâce. The Cardinal de Bouillon, grand almoner of France, raised it and placed it on a black velvet cushion. He held it thus upon his knees in the queen's carriage, where were Mademoiselle, the Grand Duchesse de Toscane, the Duchesse d'Enghien, Mlle. de Bourbon, and the Princesse de Carignan, all in black mantles. The Marquise de Montespan, the Duchesse de Créqui, and the Comtesse de Bé-

[1] "The presence at such a ceremony of the Comte de Vermandois, the son of the king and Mlle. de la Vallière, seems scandalous."—Dussieux, I. p. 191.

thune accompanied the heart also in the same carriage. The carriage was surrounded by the pages and valets of the queen, and by the Cent-Suisses, marching with halberds lowered, and was followed by the king's guards, carrying tapers of white wax. A large number of other carriages, draped with black and drawn by six horses, the carriages of Monsieur, of Madame, of the princes and princesses of the blood, and of the lords and ladies of the court, preceded and followed the queen's carriage, each attended by valets on foot, bearing lighted tapers. They arrived in this order at Val-de-Grâce. On the 10th of August the body was conducted to St. Denis with all pomp." [1]

Thus passed Queen Marie Thérèse at the moment when the grandeur of Versailles had just begun, at the moment, too, when the influence of the Marquise de Montespan was ending, and the queen's death left the coast clear for the woman who was to rule at Versailles after a fashion for thirty years, Madame de Maintenon.

THE QUEEN'S ANTECHAMBER

With the exception of the ceiling, the queen's antechamber has preserved the greater part of its original decoration. In this apartment, which is larger than either the bedchamber or the grand cabinet, the queen dined in public, *au grand couvert* as it was called, sometimes alone, sometimes with the king. At her *petit couvert* Her Majesty ate in her bedchamber or in one of her cabinets. At the public dinner the ushers admitted all well-dressed people, who came by the marble staircase into the Hall of the Queen's Guards, and passed then into the corridor behind the antechamber into which two doors at either end of the antechamber opened. Those doors are now closed and covered with large paint-

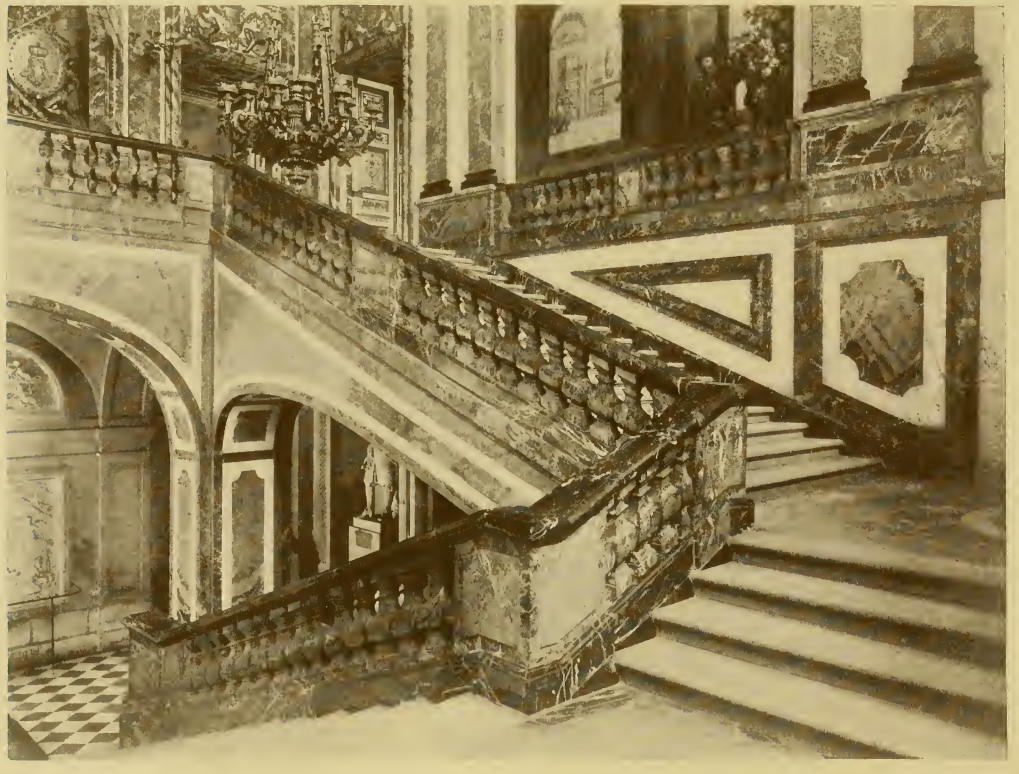
[1] Dussieux, I, pp. 190–191.

ings; by one of them the crowd entered the antechamber, filed through it, and went out by the other. The ceremony of the public dinner was fatiguing, for the gaze of the crowd tended to banish conversation and make etiquette more rigid. At the *grand couvert* the king and queen dined in pomp and silence.

In 1710 the Duchesse de Bourgogne, who then inhabited the state apartments, had a theater set up in the antechamber that she might enjoy the pleasure of seeing comedies while her pregnancy prevented her from going out. Dangeau tells us that the theater was very beautiful.

THE HALL OF THE QUEEN'S GUARDS

This splendid salon, the first of the state apartments of the queen, opening upon the landing of the marble staircase, has preserved all its decoration of the time of Louis XIV. The walls are lined throughout with black-and-white marble, and on the brilliant ceiling, which is the work of Coypel, Jupiter appears, attended by Justice and Pity. The four vases of red porphyry in the corners of the apartment were once in the Galerie des Glaces. The state apartments of the queen begin with this hall. They have been described here in reverse order, as is necessary when they are entered from the salon of Peace. Of her private apartments no traces remain; they opened out of her bedchamber, but they have entirely disappeared in the various changes made for Marie Leczinska and for Marie Antoinette. The *Petits Appartements de la Reine,* which one sees at Versailles to-day, are those of Marie Antoinette, and hold no souvenirs of the wife of Louis XIV. Owing to the death of Marie Thérèse, and the fact that her successor, Madame de Maintenon, was never publicly proclaimed, there was no queen in what is properly known as the court of Versailles. It is not necessary, therefore, to



The Marble Staircase

enumerate the various officials composing the queen's household. At the time of Marie Thérèse they numbered five hundred and seventy-two, divided into departments similar to those in the larger service of the king, of which a full account will be given later. To finish, then, with the queen, there remains but a word concerning her staircase.

THE QUEEN'S STAIRCASE

The staircase of the queen, called also the marble staircase, was built in 1671, as was the ambassadors' staircase on the other side of the royal court, and in point of uniformity the interior of the palace has been greatly marred by the loss of the latter. Less imposing than that vanished grand staircase of the king, the queen's staircase is still very handsome, all of marble, and ornamented with gilded sculptures. Even in the time of Louis XIV this staircase was more in use than the other, as it led not only to the state apartments of the queen, but to the private apartments of the king, and also to the apartments of Madame de Maintenon, all of which opened upon its landing and vestibule of marble. The arches that lead from the royal court to the entrance vestibule on the ground floor were closed formerly with handsome gates of gilded iron, the work of Delobel.

VII

THE PRIVATE APARTMENTS OF THE KING

THE expression private apartments, in connection with the rooms about to be described, is apt to be misleading. Louis XIV had little or no privacy as we understand the term, and though several of these salons were full of people at all hours, they are called the private apartments to distinguish them from the state apartments; in them Louis lived and worked, surrounded and followed by a crowd of courtiers, who had the right of entrance.

THE HALL OF THE KING'S GUARDS

This hall opens on the upper vestibule of the marble staircase, at the other end of which were the apartments of Madame de Maintenon. The landing of the staircase separates the vestibule from the Hall of the Queen's Guards, already mentioned. With the exception of the gilded cornice decorated with sculptures representing subjects of war, and the marble chimneypiece, the original decorations of this room have entirely disappeared, and those placed here by Louis Philippe at the time of the creation of the palace museum are cheap and inartistic. But under the Grand Monarch this room, which formed the entrance to his private apartments, was lined with marble and splendidly adorned. The body-guards and Cent-Suisses were on duty here.

The Grand Antechamber of the King, or *Œil-de-Bœuf*

THE KING'S ANTECHAMBER

Of the original decoration of this antechamber, the second room of the suite, nothing remains but the chimneypiece in the colored marble of Languedoc. Here the king dined *au grand couvert* when he ate in public in his own apartments, which was seldom, but he supped here every evening in state with the members of the royal family. In addition to serving as a dining-room, the antechamber was used for other purposes, one of which is given in the *État de la France de 1708* as follows: "In the king's antechamber, on every Monday at noon, the valets prepare a table, which they cover with green velvet, and place before it an arm-chair for the king. M. de Chamillart, Secretary of State, stands at the left of this chair, and after the council, about half-past twelve, before the king goes to chapel to hear mass, if he has not already heard it, all people who have petitions to present come to place them respectfully on this table. These petitions are received by a clerk of M. de Chamillart, and the Secretary of State, who on this occasion represents the king, reads them carefully, and writes in the margin of each one the name of the minister or secretary to whom the petition should be sent." [1]

THE GRAND ANTECHAMBER OF THE KING

This beautiful apartment is best known by the name of the *Œil-de-Bœuf,* from the large oval window opposite the chimney; but as that name was not used until the reign of Louis XV, it is fitting to refer to the room here by the designation applied to it in the time of Louis XIV—namely, the grand antechamber of the king. Prior to 1701 the grand antechamber was divided into two apartments, a salon and a

[1] Dussieux, I, p. 248.

bedchamber, the latter being the bedchamber of Louis XIII, which became for some years the bedchamber of his son; but in 1701, when Louis XIV established his new bedchamber in the adjoining apartment, these two rooms were united and became the grand antechamber. From the grand antechamber two doors open into the antechamber where the king dined, two into his bedchamber, and three into the grand gallery. The decorations of the grand antechamber have escaped the ravages of the Revolution and the architects of the Empire, and are very beautiful. The frieze of children, in bas-reliefs of gilded stucco, which surrounds the room between the cornice and vault of the ceiling, has remarkable grace and charm. This is the work of four artists, Flamen, Van Clève, Hurtrelle, and Pouitier. The ceiling is white, for none of the private apartments have frescoed ceilings. Between the doors are large mirrors in gilded frames of excellent workmanship, and the doors themselves are richly carved and gilded. To the right and left of the entrances to the gallery hang equestrian portraits of the king and of Monsieur, his brother; that of the king was formerly in the salon of Abundance. On the opposite wall may be seen a large painting by Nocret, representing the family of Louis XIV, near which stands a table of the king's day, of carved and gilded wood with a top of granite. The grand antechamber lacks nothing but light to make it superb; it has two windows looking on the marble court, and two on the small interior court called the queen's court, but they seem hardly sufficient. In this apartment the princes and the nobles, admitted to the *lever* of the king, waited each morning for the hour when the doors of the royal bedchamber were opened for them to enter.

THE BEDCHAMBER OF LOUIS XIV

The king's chamber is sumptuous and magnificent. As it is the center of the château, so it was the center of the old court

life; to enter through those white-and-gold doors, where one passes now so easily, was once the ambition of thousands of men and women. There are some curious statements in the *Memoirs* of Saint-Simon; for example, the following sentence, referring to the king's chamber at Versailles: "His own apartments and those of the queen are inconvenient to the last degree, dull, close, stinking." [1] No doubt, according to modern ideas of comfort, the king's chamber was inconvenient, but the duke's other adjectives are nothing more than the splenetic effusions of a disappointed and spiteful man.

The view from the windows of the royal bedchamber, across the spacious courtyards and down the distant Avenue de Paris, is more striking than that obtained from any other apartment of the palace, with the exception of the view of the gardens from the windows of the Galerie des Glaces. There is abundance of light, for the king's chamber faces the east. The white-and-gold blinds, adorned with the royal cipher and crown, are still in place; but they are opened no longer at eight in the morning by a *valet de chambre* that a Sun King may rise and shine upon a waiting world. At either end of the room are fireplaces with mantels of bluish marble and large mirrors adorned with gilded sculptures. The richly carved cornice and the walls with their beautiful pilasters are a mass of gilding. The west wall is hung with crimson velvet, bordered with gold, and above the cornice France sits enthroned on a heap of arms, beneath a gilded pavilion.[2] Below stands the king's bed on an estrade under a lofty canopy adorned with white plumes. The balustrade of carved and gilded wood, which separates the bed from the remainder of the apartment, is that of Louis's day, as is the bed itself, but neither the canopy of the bed nor the furniture

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 369.

[2] These sculptures are the work of Coustou and Lespingola. The Comptes des Bâtiments of 1701–02 give also the names of the four artists who carved the figures above the doors and mirrors—Julien, Armand, Guyot, and Nourisson.

at either side appeared there at that period. However, Louis Philippe, who saved Versailles from utter ruin, has spared no pains to reproduce here, with such materials as were at his command, the bedchamber of the Grand Monarch, and he has been successful, much more so than in some of his other efforts in the palace. The paintings which hung formerly at either side of the bed, "David," by Domenichino, and "St. John," by Raphael, are now in the Louvre. The *État de la France de 1708* gives the following details: "They are accustomed to make the king's bed while His Majesty is at mass. In making it a *valet de chambre* is at either side and an upholsterer at the foot. A *valet de chambre* remains seated inside the balustrade to guard the bed, and at meal-time he is relieved by one of his comrades. It is his business to guard the bed and to prevent any one from coming inside the balustrade. One of the *valets de chambre* on duty for the day should guard the king's bed throughout the whole day, remaining inside the balustrade. The ushers take care that people do not put on their hats or seat themselves in the chamber. Whenever the king leaves the château for a few days, a *valet de chambre* remains to guard the bed and sleeps at the foot of it." [1] These precautions were necessary in an apartment through which so many people passed daily. In passing the bed the courtiers, according to etiquette, saluted it: the ladies made a curtsy and the men bowed.

In this bedchamber the ceremonies of the *lever* and *coucher* of the king took place each day; here, also, the king frequently gave audience to ambassadors and received the oath of the officers of his household, and here each day he dined *au petit couvert*. At the present time one of the most interesting works of art in the royal chamber hangs to the left of the bed, under a copy of a painting by Rubens; it is a

[1] Dussieux, I, p. 232.

medallion in wax of Louis XIV, executed by Antoine Benoist in 1706, a remarkable portrait of the king in his old age.

THE KING'S CABINETS

At the present time the king's cabinets are united in one apartment called the hall of the Council, a room opening on one side into the king's bedchamber, on another into the grand gallery, and on a third into the bedchamber of Louis XV, formerly the billiard-room. Under Louis XIV this hall of the Council was divided into two cabinets; the larger cabinet, next to the royal chamber, was called the king's cabinet, and the smaller one, beyond, the cabinet of Wigs. The king's cabinet was magnificently furnished. His writing-desk was of silver-gilt, enriched with four diamonds at the corners, and having a drawer whose handle was adorned with a large diamond. The inkstand, which rested on a tray of blue enamel, was in the form of a globe of blue enamel, ornamented with diamond *fleurs-de-lis*, and surmounted by a sun with rays of gold set with diamonds, bearing the legend *Nec pluribus impar*.[1] At either side of the globe, lions of carved silver held on their heads the ink-bottle and the sand-box. The seals were of gold. De Villiers had made the inkstand; and on the chimneypiece stood a clock of gold, adorned with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, the work of Langlois. The furniture was covered with green velvet bordered with gold fringe, and the walls were hung with a number of rare paintings in frames of gilded wood, carved by Caffieri, or in frames of carved silver. There were also fourteen busts and statues of marble or of bronze. This sumptuous cabinet was the center of the monarchy; here the king worked with his ministers, and in this room he decided upon nearly all the

[1] Inventaire des diamants de la Couronne, II, p. 75 (Dussieux, I, p. 223).

important measures of the last thirty years of his reign. He had here his plans of fortifications and canals.

In the adjoining cabinet the king's wigs were kept in glass cases. He changed his wig several times each day, usually before going to mass, before driving out after dinner, on returning from the hunt or the promenade, and again before going to supper. These changes were necessary that His Majesty might appear at all hours in a wig properly curled and in perfect order. Every morning Quentin, the king's barber, who had charge of the wigs, brought to Louis two of different lengths that he might choose one to begin the day.

There were also the little cabinets which surrounded the Cour des Cerfs, two of which opened into the cabinet of Wigs; but these were swept away by Louis XV, who made great changes in this part of the château. One was the king's bath-room; in others the people of the service, the *garçons bleus,* were in waiting, and in some he kept his dogs. Where one sees to-day Louis XV's cabinet of the Chase there was formerly a staircase, the back staircase to which Saint-Simon frequently refers; by it the king could go down to the marble court if he did not wish to take his coach at the public entrance, and he made use of it often to grant secret audiences in his cabinet when for one reason or another it might have been unwise to have had the person received pass through the Hall of the Guards and the crowded antechambers; by it also the people of the service came and went.

THE BILLIARD-ROOM

From the king's cabinet and from the cabinet of Wigs doors led to the billiard-room, which became later the bedchamber of Louis XV and of Louis XVI. King Louis XIV was fond of billiards, and his taste for the game lasted a long time.

The Hall of the Council, formerly the Cabinet of Louis XIV

On winter evenings he played with M. de Vendôme and the Duc de Gramont, and especially with the Maréchal de Villeroi and M. de Chamillart; the latter, who became Secretary of State, owed the foundation of his fortune to his skill with the cue. Among its decorations the billiard-room had seventeen large branched candlesticks of gilded bronze, which were the work of Boule.

THE CABINETS OF AGATES AND OF JEWELS

These two apartments, separated only by arches, formed a glittering hall, and were filled with precious objects. Together with the billiard-room, just mentioned, they occupied the north side of the marble court on the main floor. Under Louis XV the cabinet of Agates was changed and redecorated and became the salon of the Clocks, one of the most beautiful of his private apartments. The arches were closed by a wall, and the cabinet of Jewels was transformed into a dining-room. But, as was generally the case with Louis XV, what he destroyed was superior to what he created. From 1684 to 1686 Louis XIV purchased many curiosities and works of art for these rooms. He had agents everywhere, in Venice, in Rome, in Constantinople, in Milan; and Europe and the East were ransacked for costly vases and rare jewels to garnish the Sun King's cabinets at Versailles. The furniture and jewel cabinets in these apartments were made by Boule, and the paintings were set in frames of carved silver or of silver-gilt.

THE LITTLE GALLERY AND THE CABINET OF MEDALS

The cabinet of Jewels opened into an oval salon lined with mirrors, and that, in turn, gave access to the little gallery, whose windows looked out on the royal court above the entrance to the ambassadors' staircase. The site of the little gal-

lery had been occupied previously by the apartments of Madame de Montespan at the time of her favor. This gallery had a splendid ceiling, painted by Mignard, who received 33,000 livres for the work, and, with a salon at either end, was decorated on a small scale like the Galerie des Glaces. From the little gallery doors opened upon the landing of the ambassadors' staircase.

The cabinet of Medals, though not directly connected with the king's private apartments, belonged, however, to the suite. To reach it the king passed from the little gallery along the landing of the ambassadors' staircase into the salon of Venus, and turned to the right into the small salon of Abundance, in the south wall of which a door, raised two steps from the floor, led to the cabinet of Medals. The room was octagonal in form, richly gilded, hung with pictures by Van Dyck, Holbein, Raphael, and Claude Lorrain, and lined with mirrors and beautiful cabinets containing medals, coins, and cameos. Of these Louis had a superb collection in gold, silver, bronze, agate, jasper, onyx, and all sorts of precious stones, and he went to see them frequently and to show them to others, for he was very fond of art and of artistic things. Rainsant, who had charge of the medals, had arranged the collection with so much intelligence that Louis was delighted and took pleasure in studying with him the most curious pieces. On such occasions Père de la Chaise, who was fond of medals and pretended to be well versed in the subject, made that a pretext for being with the king. The greater part of the royal collection is now in the National Library in Paris. With this cabinet of Medals the private apartments of the king ended. Therefore let us return to the upper vestibule of the marble staircase on the opposite side of the royal court and inspect the apartments of Madame de Maintenon.

VIII

THE APARTMENTS OF MADAME DE MAINTENON

LOUIS PHILIPPE deserves so much credit for saving the Château of Versailles from ruin and for establishing the magnificent historical museum which it contains that it is unpleasant to have to criticize him severely; but the fact remains that in the apartments of Madame de Maintenon Louis Philippe's work was nothing less than vandalism. Both the Citizen King and his architects labored under the delusion that those apartments were on the north side of the royal court instead of on the south, when, as Dussieux in his admirable work on Versailles has pointed out, they might have discovered their error with the least research.[1] Thus, without knowing what they were doing, and in order to build a staircase to the attic floor and find room for a number of paintings illustrating the history of France from 1792 to 1796, they destroyed apartments so full of souvenirs.

The apartments of Madame de Maintenon opened upon the upper vestibule of the marble staircase, directly opposite the Hall of the King's Guards, and consisted of five rooms. These were composed as follows: two antechambers with a little cabinet, a bedchamber, and a grand cabinet. The antechambers and the bedchamber were above the main entrance to the marble staircase of the queen, and their win-

[1] Dussieux, I, p. 274.

dows looked out on the royal court. The little cabinet, which had a narrow staircase leading to the entresol for the use of the servants, opened out of the first antechamber; in crossing the first antechamber to the second, people passed the door of this cabinet on the right. The bedchamber, which opened out of the second antechamber, was a corner room, and its windows and balconies still remain.

This bedchamber was lighted by two windows on the north and east. Opposite the north window was the chimney, and to the right of the chimney, back in an alcove which had neither light nor air, stood the bed of Madame de Maintenon. In the corner of the room to the left of the chimney a narrow passage, which still exists, led from the bedchamber to the grand cabinet. It is unfortunate that no traces remain of the decorations of this bedchamber, where the king spent so much time in the latter years of his life, and where so much business was transacted. Saint-Simon tells us that when Louis worked with his ministers in the apartment of Madame de Maintenon the king's table was placed at the left of the chimney, on the side of the cabinet mentioned above, and that his arm-chair stood with its back to the wall. There was a stool for the minister, and another for his papers. On the other side of the chimney, in a niche of red damask, Madame de Maintenon sat in an arm-chair, with a small table before her.

The king gave these apartments to Madame de Maintenon in 1682, and not, as has been frequently stated, after her marriage with His Majesty. In the *Comptes de 1682* we find that Jouvenet and Mazeline were working on the sculptures and the decorations, but it is possible that Madame de Maintenon did not occupy the rooms until the following year, at which time, according to the *Comptes de 1683,* the wainscot, the painting, and the gilding were finished. In 1698 Louis enlarged the apartments of Madame de Maintenon by giving

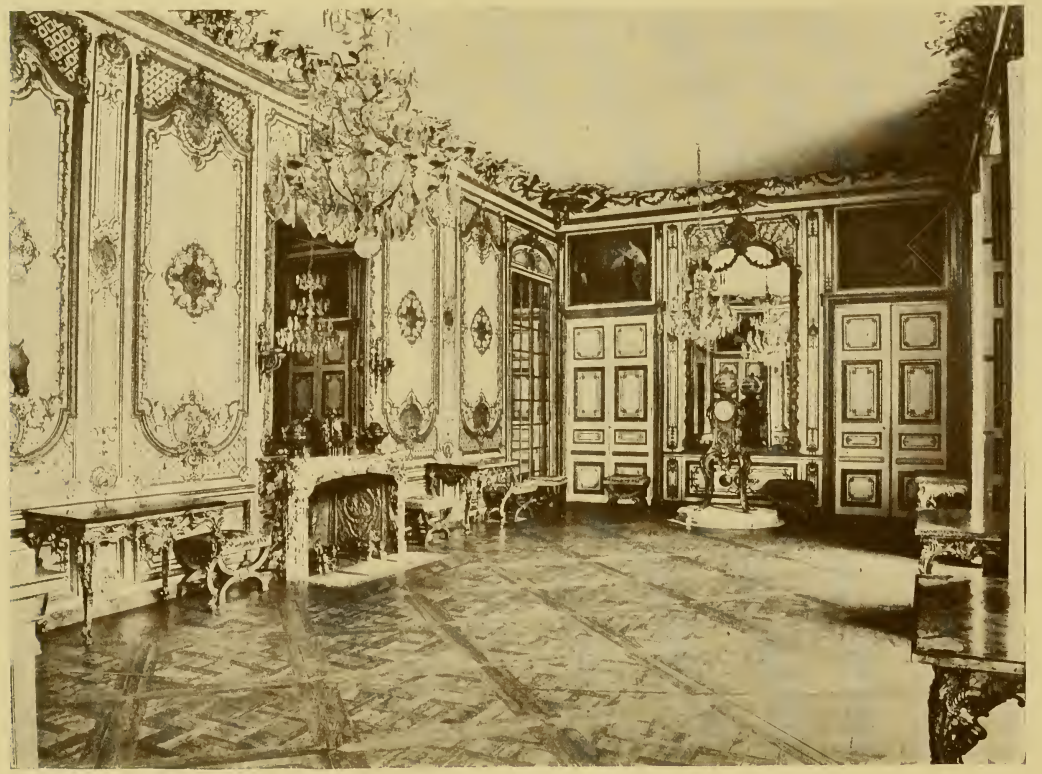
her two rooms, previously occupied by the Cardinal de Furstemberg, which were near her grand cabinet; but in 1713 she gave them up to the Duc d'Alençon, the son of the Duc de Berry. She had also her hôtel at Versailles, 18 Rue des Bons-Enfants, and, like all the fashionable world, her château in the country, that of Maintenon.

IX

THE GRAND HALL OF THE GUARDS AND OTHER APARTMENTS

THE Grand Hall of the Guards opens upon the landing of the marble staircase and into the Hall of the Queen's Guards, and its windows look out on the *parterre du Midi.* On the third side was the bedchamber of Madame de Maintenon, and on the fourth her grand cabinet, but in the reign of Louis XIV no doors connected the Hall of the Guards with those apartments. The original decorations have entirely disappeared, and at present, as a part of the palace museum, the Hall of the Guards is devoted to Napoleon and the glories of the First Empire. This hall was the first chapel of the château from 1670 to 1682, at which date the second chapel was constructed to the north of the royal court on the site of the present salon of Hercules. In the Grand Hall of the Guards, Louis XIV washed the feet of the poor each year on Holy Thursday.

From this hall a handsome passage led to the large salon connecting the central portion of the château with the south wing. There certain shopkeepers, who had bought the privilege, had their booths in which they sold, for the convenience of the courtiers, books, stationery, watches, jewelry, toilet articles, and perfumery; and this fact gave the room its name, the salon of Shopkeepers. Under Louis XIV these people were kept within limits, but at a later period they spread themselves on the landings of the staircases and in



The Salon of the Clocks, formerly the Cabinet of Agates

other parts of the château. Beyond this salon was the spacious staircase of the princes from which doors led to the apartments of the long south wing, where the princes of the blood were lodged.

THE APARTMENTS OF THE GOVERNESS OF THE CHILDREN OF FRANCE

After 1682 the governess of the Children of France was the Maréchale de la Mothe, who occupied a suite of rooms on the main floor of the wing which stands between the royal court and the court of the princes. There she brought up the three sons of the Grand Dauphin, the Ducs de Bourgogne, d'Anjou, and de Berry, and later the Duc de Bourgogne lived there until the death of his father in 1711.

THE NORTH AND SOUTH WINGS

To finish with the main floor of the château, a word should be added concerning the north and south wings on the side of the gardens. The north wing was inhabited by a large number of nobles whose residence in the château was made necessary by the nature of the posts they held at court, and also by some other people to whom the king had granted apartments; while in the south wing, as has been said, the princes of the blood were lodged. In both wings the rooms were numerous, and in the north wing, owing to the frequent changes of occupants, apartments were being altered and redecorated continually; so that, with one or two exceptions, it is impossible to locate with any certainty the lodgings of particular individuals. The exceptions, however, are worthy of note, since they concern the two writers, Dangeau and Saint-Simon, who have given us the most intimate knowledge of the court of Louis XIV. Dangeau lived at the end of the south wing on the attic floor, facing the garden; Saint-

Simon was lodged on the first floor in the north wing. We know also that in 1682 the Dauphine of Bavaria had apartments in the south wing, which are replaced to-day by a portion of the Gallery of Battles, and that she gave birth there, on the 6th of August of that year, to the Duc de Bourgogne. It would be interesting to know where others lived, Racine, for example; but of all the glittering throng that passed daily through the gilded antechambers and salons of the Sun King no traces remain save the portraits which hang in the palace museum. The rooms, the little cabinets, salons, bedchambers, and entresols, where they lived and planned and plotted and loved and hated, where they were fed and flattered, were fired with hope and ambition, or bitten with jealousy and chagrin, where they sunned themselves and where they suffered, all have disappeared. In their places are long galleries and lines of pictures, portraying the glories of France.

X

THE APARTMENTS OF MONSEIGNEUR

THE apartments of Mgr. le Grand Dauphin consisted of ten rooms on the ground floor of the château, facing the *parterre du Midi,* and directly under the state apartments of the queen and the salon of Peace. Though Monseigneur had no force of character, he seems to have had much taste in matters of art, and his rooms were so beautiful that on the 18th of February, 1689, the king took James II of England to see them, as one of the wonders of the château.

The principal entrance to the dauphin's apartments was by way of the gallery of the peristyle, or lower gallery as it was called then, which is beneath the Galerie des Glaces, and is called now, without reason, the Gallery of Louis XIII. Three cabinets, opening one into another, with windows looking out on the great terrace, led to the grand cabinet, a corner room under the salon of Peace. Next to the grand cabinet was the dauphin's bedchamber; then followed four rooms occupied by his wife, the Dauphine of Bavaria; and finally the Hall of the Dauphin's Guards, opposite the lower vestibule of the marble staircase. The original decorations of all these rooms were destroyed by Louis XV in 1747, and in turn the decorations of the Louis XV period, which had been modified for Marie Antoinette, were destroyed by Louis Philippe to find space for portraits of admirals and marshals of France. Such pictures were unsuitable, but, thanks to

the taste and judgment of M. Pierre de Nolhac, the distinguished curator of the Museum of Versailles, who in the last ten years has done so much to make the château a history of France in art, they have been removed and replaced by portraits and decorations appropriate to the eighteenth century. After the time of Monseigneur the rooms were occupied by his son, the Duc de Bourgogne; then by the Regent Orléans, who died suddenly in the second cabinet in 1723; by the Duc de Bourbon during his ministry; by the Dauphin, the son of Louis XV; by the Comte de Provence, brother of Louis XVI; and finally by the children of Marie Antoinette. For the son of Louis XV the bedchamber of Monseigneur was divided into two apartments, a cabinet and a library; the latter has escaped destruction, and its decorations in white and blue and gold are among the most beautiful specimens of French art in the eighteenth century.

Monseigneur had filled his rooms with riches. "At the house of Monseigneur," wrote Félibien, "one sees in the cabinets of his apartments an exquisite collection of all that is most rare and precious, not only in respect to the necessary furniture, tables, cabinets, porcelains, mirrors, chandeliers, but also paintings by the most famous masters, bronzes, vases of agate, jewels, and cameos. . . . Mignard has painted the ceiling of the grand cabinet, where he has represented the portrait of Monseigneur. The cabinet which opens into the lower gallery in the center of the château is paneled on walls and ceiling with ebony, in which mirrors are set in gilded borders." [1] Boule made most of the furniture in these cabinets. In the grand cabinet the front of the chimney was decorated with paintings on a gold ground, and for one massive table of carved silver Balin was paid 68,259 livres.[2]

[1] Dussieux, I, p. 295. [2] Idem.

XI

VARIOUS APARTMENTS ON THE GROUND FLOOR

IT is not easy to reconstruct the arrangement of the ground floor of the château as it existed under Louis XIV, nor is it necessary to do so here, except in certain particulars, which may serve to throw some light upon the mechanism of the court.

THE APARTMENTS OF THE BATHS

The apartments of the Baths consisted of five large rooms, furnished and decorated with great luxury: the vestibule, the salon of Diana, the salon, the chamber of the Baths, and the cabinet of the Baths. They were beneath the state apartments of the king, and their windows opened on the *parterre du Nord* and on the great terrace; all were lined with the most beautiful marbles, brought from all parts of France, and adorned with painted ceilings and marble columns with bases and capitals of gilded bronze. The vestibule was beneath the salons of Mars and of Mercury; the salon was under the salon of War, while the chamber and the cabinet of the Baths were below the north end of the Galerie des Glaces. In both the chamber and the cabinet there were marble tubs, the one in the cabinet being octagonal in form, richly carved, and costing 9000 livres in 1673.[1] Among the decorations of the chamber was a mirror of marble.

[1] This tub was taken in 1750 to the Hermitage of Madame de Pompadour.

In 1684 the king took from Madame de Montespan the rooms she had occupied on the first floor, to the north of the royal court, adjoining his private apartments. This was the first public mark of her disgrace, and followed almost immediately Louis's marriage with Madame de Maintenon. He gave to the Marquise de Montespan the apartments of the Baths, but to render them habitable for her it was necessary to remove many of the marbles, especially the marble floors, for which floors of wood were substituted. The marquise took possession of her new apartments in January, 1685, and occupied them until March, 1691, the time of her final departure from the court. Louis presented them then to the Duc du Maine, and later to the Comte de Toulouse, both of whom were his sons by Madame de Montespan.

THE APARTMENTS OF THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARDS

The captain of the guards was lodged, facing the marble court, directly under the king; his bedchamber was below the king's cabinet. Since it was his business to follow the king everywhere, whenever the monarch was out of his chamber, it was necessary to have him close at hand. He walked immediately behind the king, and no one was permitted to pass between him and the sovereign. When the king mounted his horse or took his carriage, the captain of the guards followed him on horseback or in a carriage, and at table he stood behind the monarch's chair.

THE KING'S WARDROBE

The rooms in which Louis's wearing-apparel and robes of state were kept faced the marble court on the south side, and were below the Hall of the King's Guards and the first antechamber. The service of the Wardrobe was directed by a

grand master, having under his orders two masters of the Wardrobe, four first valets, sixteen valets, four *garçons ordinaires,* and a large number of subordinates, tailors, hosiers, bootmakers, etc.

The other rooms on the ground floor of the château were occupied under Louis XIV by different members of the nobility, and can therefore be omitted. But before leaving the palace to pass to some of its dependencies, let us turn to the chapel, where the Grand Monarch, who had become devout through the influence of Madame de Maintenon, sat so frequently in the last years of his life.

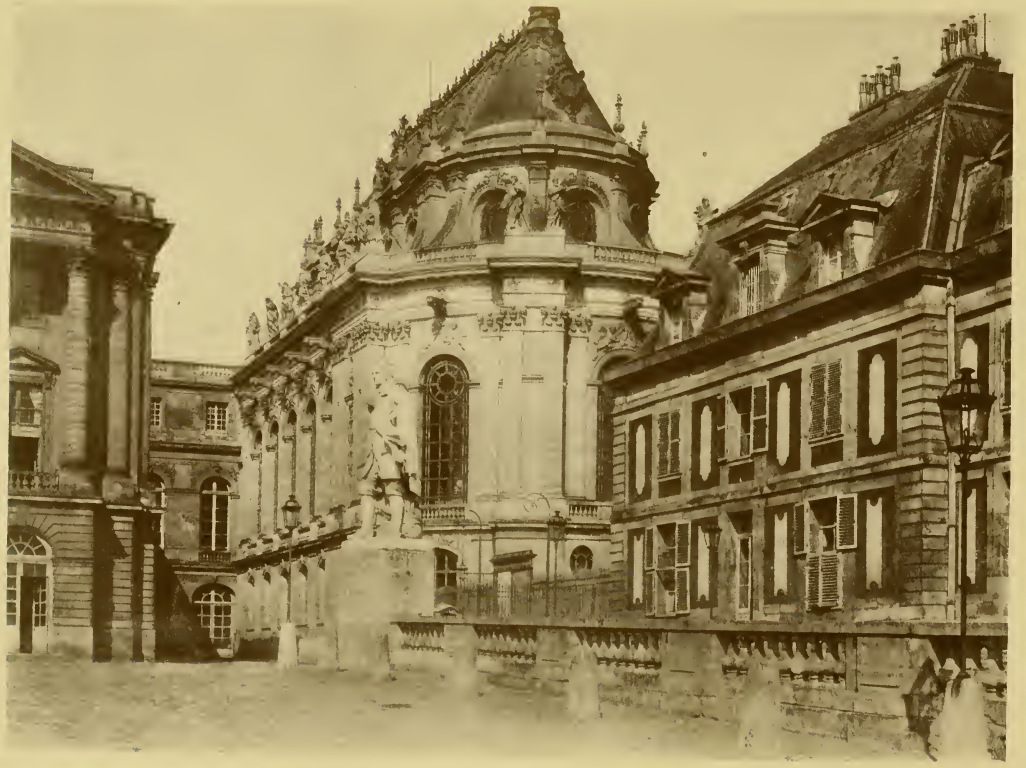
XII

THE CHAPEL

THE first chapel of the château, that of Louis XIII, was on the first floor, on the site of the queen's staircase, and was destroyed in 1671, at the time of the construction of that staircase. While waiting for the new chapel to be finished, a temporary chapel was prepared in the Grand Hall of the Guards, which, nevertheless, served as the chapel of the château for ten years, 1672 to 1682, as is sometimes the case with things erected originally to fill a temporary need. On the 30th of April, 1682, the third chapel was blessed by the Archbishop of Paris in the presence of the king and queen, and from that date until the 5th of June, 1710, a period of twenty-eight years, the king heard mass there.[1] That chapel was destined to play a more important part in the life of Versailles than its predecessors. In July, 1683, the queen died, and in the following June, in that third chapel royal of the château, the King of France was married to Françoise d'Aubigné, Marquise de Maintenon, and a new epoch began at court.

In 1698 the king, who had become devout, determined to raise that monument of his piety, the grand chapel of Versailles, which we see to-day. It stands to the north of the royal court, on a line with the pavilion of Gabriel, having between it and that pavilion the small court of the chapel.

[1] The third chapel occupied the present site of the salon of Hercules.



The Chapel, from the Court of the Ministers

The chapel has two vestibules; the one on the ground floor opens into the colonnade leading to the garden under the salon of Hercules, while the upper vestibule on the first floor opens into that salon, which, as has been said, was constructed in the reign of Louis XV. Under Louis XIV the tribune of the third chapel, which was preserved in 1710, when the third chapel was destroyed, served as a passage from the state apartments of the king to the upper vestibule of the new chapel.

The king's first idea was to have a building entirely of marble, but on reflection he decided that such a building would be too cold and damp, and although the works were under way he stopped them in March, 1699, and demolished what had been begun in order to build anew, this time in cut stone, the whitest and finest that could be found. Mansart was then the king's first architect, and drew the designs for the edifice, taking some parts of his plan from the Sainte Chapelle in Paris, though the work was finally completed by Robert de Cotte. The exterior, with its statues and bas-reliefs and richly ornamented roof, is so handsome that the chapel deserves a site less shut in by the other buildings of the château, in order that it might be seen to greater advantage.

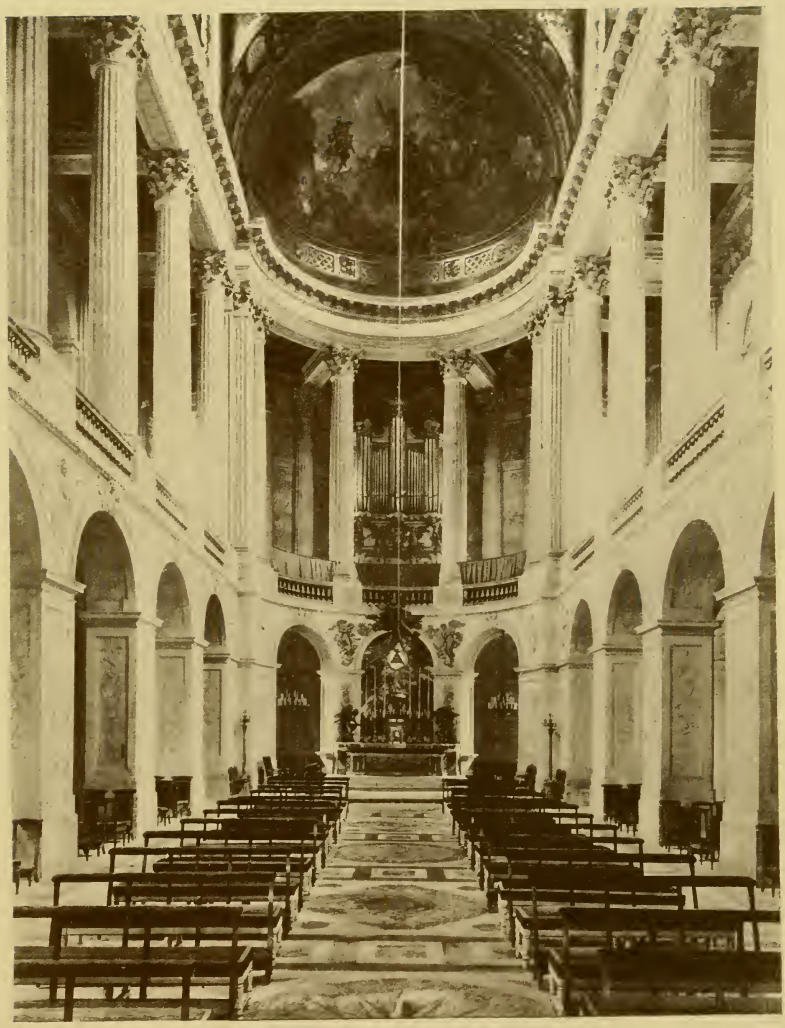
The decoration of the interior is magnificent. Above the marble arcades at either side of the nave rise the lofty white Corinthian columns which support the roof. Between the bases of the columns runs a gilded balustrade, and the arcades are covered with sculptured bas-reliefs. The large paintings on the ceiling, striking in conception and gorgeous in coloring, are the work of Jouvenet, of Coypel, and of Delafosse, and represent the Descent of the Holy Ghost, God in Glory, and the Resurrection. The compartments of the ceilings to the right and left above the tribunes were painted by Boulogne the younger; and the royal cipher and the arms of France which adorn the windows are the work of Michu.

The altar, raised on three steps, is of marble and gilded bronze, decorated with bronze statues, and surmounted by a heavenly Glory, carved by Van Clève. The royal tribune, which opens into the upper vestibule, faces the altar and fills the width of the nave. The circular parts at the sides supported formerly two lantern-towers of glass and gilded wood, which served as oratories for the king and Madame de Maintenon, that of the king being on the left, and Madame de Maintenon's on the right.

By the present regulations of the palace museum, the interior of the chapel must be viewed from the upper vestibule behind the royal tribune, for admission to the ground floor is to be obtained only through a special permit; but it is worth while to take the trouble to secure such a permit that one may examine the carvings and bronzes at close range, and turning see, as the courtiers saw it, the splendid tribune of the king. There, behind his gilded balustrade covered with red velvet, he sat and knelt, the cynosure of every eye. "Whoever," says La Bruyère, "considers that the king's countenance is the courtier's supreme felicity, that he passes his life looking on it and within sight of it, will comprehend to some extent how to see God constitutes the glory and happiness of the saints." Yet the glittering throng that filled this stately edifice, gazing not at the altar, but at the royal tribune, heard plain language. Bourdaloue preached here his famous sermon on hypocrisy, and Père Soanen spoke his mind on luxury and vice with such severity that Louis called the sermon "a trumpet-blast from heaven." Above all, they had Massillon, to whom the king made this remark: "My father, I have heard other preachers and have been well pleased with them, but when I hear you I am much dissatisfied with myself." [1]

On the 5th of June, 1710, the Cardinal de Noailles, Archbishop of Paris, blessed the new chapel of Versailles, and on

[1] Dussieux, II, p. 110.



Interior of the Chapel

the 7th of June the king and the Duchesse de Bourgogne made their devotions there for the first time. In this fourth and final chapel, which he had been ten years in building, the Grand Monarch heard mass during the remaining five years of his life.[1]

[1] The principal preachers who delivered sermons before the king in the old chapel of Versailles were Bourdaloue (1684, 1686, 1689, 1691, 1693, 1697); Soanen of the Oratory (1686, 1688, 1695), an orator of rare eloquence and great severity; Gaillard, a Jesuit (1688, 1690, 1698); Massillon, the great orator of the end of the reign, who preached for the first time at court on the 1st of November, 1699; Maure (1700); Bonneau (1701); Lombard (1703). In the new chapel: Quinquet (1711); Canappeville (1712); Eon (1713); Poncet de la Rivière (1715), who was the last preacher heard by Louis XIV. Bossuet preached before the king from 1662 to 1669 at the Louvre and at St. Germain, but never at Versailles.

XIII

THE GRAND COMMUN

THE Grand Commun, a large square brick building, constructed about an interior court, stands on the Rue de la Surintendance, opposite the south wing of the château, and is used at present as a military hospital. Erected by Mansart from 1682 to 1685, it contained under Louis XIV the royal kitchens, and the lodgings of the people connected with the service of the king's table, or, as they called it then, the *Bouche du Roi.* This service, one of the eleven grand services affecting the person of the king, will be given now in detail.

Under Louis XIV the Grand Commun had thirty-two apartments on the first floor, and thirty-four on the second, for the various officers of the *Maison du Roi,* and in addition a large number of lodgings for the people of the service, in all about 1000 rooms with not less than 1500 inhabitants. At the head of the service was the grand master of the *Maison du Roi.* Then came the four chief officers: the *premier maître d'hôtel,* assisted by twelve *maîtres d'hôtel,* serving by the quarter, that is, one week in each month, and carrying when on duty, as the sign of their authority, a baton of silver-gilt; the grand pantler; the grand cup-bearer; the grand carver. The last three officials appeared only at certain great ceremonies, at a coronation for example; ordinarily their functions were performed by thirty-six gentlemen servants of the king, serving by the quarter. The service was

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Jules Hardouin Mansart

divided into seven offices, charged with the preparation of the food and drink for the tables of the king and queen and of the princes of the blood, and was composed as follows: the Goblet of the King, divided into the Pantry and the Wine-cellars; the King's Food, or Kitchen Food, intended only for the king himself; the Pantry-ordinary; the Wine-cellars-ordinary; the Kitchen-ordinary; the Fruit-loft; the Quarter-master's Department. According to the *État de la France de 1712,* the seven offices employed three hundred and twenty-four persons: butlers, controllers, head cooks and under-cooks, cup-bearers, carvers, plate-changers, table-setters, chair-bearers, equerries, scullions, turnspits, cellarers, common gardeners and salad gardeners, porters, laundry servants, etc.

The officers of the Pantry had charge of the table-linen, the bread and the fruit, and each morning it was the duty of the chief of the Pantry to bring the king's breakfast, bread or bouillon, to the royal bedchamber. The officers of the Wine-cellars looked after the wine and water. "Every day, before the *lever* of the king, two chiefs of the Goblet, one of the Pantry, the other of the Wine-cellars, carry into the king's cabinet some bread, two bottles of wine, two bottles of water, two napkins, and some ice, which they place in His Majesty's bottle-case, that stands in the cabinet, in case His Majesty wishes to drink promptly. These officers of the Goblet should make the trial,[1] in the presence of the first *valet de chambre,* of all that they bring." [2] The officers of the Goblet appeared at all the king's meals, and also at the collations served when the king returned from the chase. If he was at the Council, or was occupied in some other manner, and desired to drink, it was their business to bring water or wine. They assisted,

[1] The trial (*essai*), that is, the tasting, as a precaution against poison, was required by custom whenever any food or drink was served to the king, and a certain portion in a separate dish or glass was always brought for the *essai.*

[2] Dussieux, II, p. 149.

too, at the king's communions in the chapel and presented the napkins. To the service of the Goblet were attached, also, such people as the wine-porter and the pack-horse-porter. Their duties were as follows: "The wine-porter is to bring to the chase, or wherever the king may have gone, the collation of His Majesty. This collation is placed in a basket of red cloth, bordered with gold, and having on two sides the arms of the king. It consists of bread, biscuits, fruit, pastry, napkins, wine and water in two silver flagons, and a portion of all for the trial. The pack-horse-porter carries on campaign, on a pack-horse, table-linen, knives, salt, bread, fruit, sweetmeats, a cup for the king and another for the trial, for fear that the wagons and pack-horses, ordered for the purpose, may not arrive in time." [1]

The Kitchen prepared the king's food. The chief of the service was the Kitchen equerry, under whom were the head cook, who had charge of the entrées, another cook (*hâteur*), who had charge of the roast meats, and the head gardener, who managed the kitchen-gardens. These were the principal officers, but the service employed many people. Here are some of the duties of the subordinates: "The kitchen boys are obliged to cut the meats. In the evening the gardener gives them the meat for the king's broth. They cook it at night, and in the morning the gardener, taking it from them, makes the broth, which he places in the hands of the equerry, on duty for the day, to serve to His Majesty. The porters bring wood and water and supply charcoal. They provide also the kitchen utensils and keep them in good order. They are obliged to go to the Quartermaster's Department for wood to warm the water at night for the king's broth, and to sleep on guard, as well as the kitchen boys, to guard the broth. The pack-horse [2] of the kitchen carries the King's Meat on

[1] Dussieux, II, p. 150.
[2] That is to say, the porter of the pack-horse.

a journey; the pack-horse of the chase carries the cold meats for the king. The monitor follows the king on a journey, and gives notice to the cooks when the king arrives, and the hour at which he wishes to dine or sup." [1]

The Fruit-loft had the service of the fruit for the king's table, but in addition it furnished the wax candles for the chandeliers and candlesticks in the château, the torches carried by the valets, and the palms for Palm Sunday.

The Quartermaster's Department supplied all the firewood and charcoal burned in the château. The officers of that service made the fire in the king's bedchamber before His Majesty rose in the morning, and it was their business to make and keep up the fires in the royal apartments during the day. But in spite of all that the service could do, those vast salons, with nothing save open fireplaces to heat them, were cold in winter.

The other three services—that is to say, the Pantry-ordinary, Wine-cellars-ordinary, and Kitchen-ordinary—furnished food and drink to all the officers of the *Maison du Roi* who had the right to eat at court, or, as it was called then, *bouche à cour*. At the Grand Commun the queen had her seven offices also, like those of the king; the dauphin had as many, and the dauphine likewise. All this complicated administration was regulated by the *Bureau du Roi,* composed of the king's *premier maître d'hôtel,* other *maîtres d'hôtel* serving by the quarter, the masters of the Money-chamber, and the controller of the Kitchen. They received the funds for the expenses of the Grand Commun and paid the various officers. It was the business of the controller to receive the meats and fish, and to examine all the accounts of the Goblet and the Kitchen.

The following details from the *État de la France de 1712* show how the king's dinner was served when he dined in

[1] Dussieux, II, p. 151.

public: "The usher of the hall, having received the order for the king's cover,[1] goes to the Hall of the Guards, strikes with his wand upon the door of their hall, and cries aloud, *'Messieurs, au couvert du Roi!'*; then with a guard he returns to the Goblet. After that the chief of the Goblet brings the *nef*,[2] while the other officers carry the remaining articles which compose the cover. The body-guard and the usher march near the *nef*, carrying two table-cloths, and the usher of the hall marches before them, holding his wand, and in the evening a torch also. When they have reached the place where the trial table is prepared, the usher of the hall unfolds one of the table-cloths, and the usher and the chief of the Goblet, each holding an end of the cloth, throw it adroitly over the trial table. The officers of the Goblet place the *nef* and prepare the rest of the cover. Then the gentleman servant on duty for the trial makes ready the trial, for the chief of the Goblet, of the bread and salt of the king; he also makes the trial of the napkins which are in the *nef*, and of the spoons, forks, knives, and tooth-picks of His Majesty, which are in the *cadenas*, and prepares the trial of them for the chief of the Goblet. Having done this, the gentleman servant takes possession of the trial table and continues to guard it.

"The trial having been made, the officers of the Goblet go to the table where the king dines and cover it with a table-cloth. Upon this cloth the gentlemen servants spread a large napkin, one half of which hangs below the top of the table in front of His Majesty's chair, and on the napkin they place the king's cover—his plate, his bread and salt, the *cadenas*

[1] By the cover (*couvert*) was meant the dressing of the table, the king's bread and salt, his plate, glass and cup, knife, spoon, fork, etc.

[2] The *nef* was of gold in the form of a ship, and contained the salt-cellars, the napkins, between scented cushions, and the carving-knives. In passing the *nef* all persons saluted it, as they did the king's bed. When not in service it was kept on the chimneypiece of the cabinet of Medals.

containing his knife, fork, and spoon, and his napkin folded. One of the gentlemen servants then draws over all the half of the large napkin that hangs below the table, and places the serving-plates, and the spoons and forks, wrapped in a napkin between two plates of gold, which will be required in the service. Having done this, he remains beside the table to guard the king's cover.

"Meanwhile the usher of the hall, who has returned to the Hall of the Guards, strikes with his wand against their door, and cries loudly, '*Messieurs, à la Viande du Roi!*' He goes then to the office of the Kitchen, where he finds the *maître d'hôtel* on duty, a gentleman servant, and the controller." [1]

In such fashion the table was made ready for the King's Meat (*Viande du Roi*), but to reach the royal table the king's dinner, on leaving the Grand Commun, had to cross the Rue de la Surintendance, enter the south wing of the château by the door opposite the Grand Commun, ascend a staircase,[2] pass through several corridors, cross the upper vestibule of the staircase of the princes, the salon of the Shopkeepers, the Grand Hall of the Guards, the upper vestibule of the marble staircase, and finally the Hall of the King's Guards, in order to reach the first antechamber, where, as has been said, the king dined in public when he dined thus in his own apartments; when he dined in public with the queen the peregrinations of the dinner were the same to the Grand Hall of the Guards, from which it was carried through the Hall of the Queen's Guards to her antechamber. In view of these facts, it is not surprising that a large number of persons were required in the service of the *Bouche*. The manner in which the King's Meat came to table was regulated by the *Ordonnances de la Maison du Roi* as follows:

[1] Dussieux, II, pp. 138–139.
[2] This staircase was destroyed by Louis Philippe.

"The Meat of His Majesty will be carried in this order: Two of his guards will march first, followed by the usher of the hall, the *maître d'hôtel* with his baton, the gentleman servant of the Pantry, the controller-general, the controller clerk of the office, and others who carry the Meat, the equerry of the Kitchen and the guard of the plates and dishes, and behind them two other guards of His Majesty, who are to allow no one to approach the Meat.

"In the office called the *Bouche,* the equerry of the Kitchen arranges the dishes upon a table, and presents two trials of bread to the *maître d'hôtel,* who makes the trial of the first course, and who, having placed the meats for the trial upon these two trials of bread, gives one to the equerry of the Kitchen, who eats it, while the other is eaten by the *maître d'hôtel.* Afterward the gentleman servant takes the first dish, the second is taken by the controller, and the other officers of the Kitchen take the rest. They advance in this order; the *maître d'hôtel,* having his baton, marches at the head, preceded some steps by the usher of the hall, carrying his wand, which is the sign of his office, and in the evening bearing a torch as well. When the Meat, accompanied by three of the body-guards with carbines on their shoulders, has arrived,[1] the *maître d'hôtel* makes a reverence to the *nef.* The gentleman servant, holding the first dish, places it upon the table where the *nef* is, and having received a trial portion from the gentleman servant in charge of the trial table, he makes the trial himself and places his dish upon the trial table. The gentleman servant having charge of this table takes the other dishes from the hands of those who carry them, and places them also on the trial table. After the trial of them has been made they are carried by the other gentlemen servants to the table of the king.

"The first course being upon the table, the *maître d'hôtel*

[1] That is, in the first antechamber, where the king is to dine.

with his baton, preceded by the usher of the hall with his wand, goes to inform the king; and when His Majesty has arrived at table the *maître d'hôtel* presents a wet napkin to him, of which trial has been made in the presence of the officer of the Goblet, and takes it again from the king's hands. During the dinner the gentleman servant in charge of the trial table continues to make trial in the presence of the officers of the Goblet and of the Kitchen of all that they bring for each course.

"When His Majesty desires to drink, the cup-bearer cries at once in a loud tone, 'The drink for the king!' makes a reverence to the king, and goes to the sideboard to take from the hands of the chief of the Wine-cellars the salver and cup of gold, and the two crystal decanters of wine and water. He returns, preceded by the chiefs of the Goblet and the Wine-cellars, and the three, having reached the king's table, make a reverence to His Majesty. The chief of the Goblet, standing near the king, holds a little trial cup of silver-gilt, into which a gentleman servant pours a small quantity of wine and water from the decanters. A portion of this the chief of the Goblet pours into a second trial cup which is presented by his assistant, who, in turn, hands it to the gentleman servant. The chief and the gentleman servant make the trial, and when the latter has handed his cup to the chief, that officer returns both cups to his assistant. When the trial has been made in this manner in the king's sight, the gentleman servant, making a reverence to the king, presents to His Majesty the cup of gold and the golden salver on which are the decanters. The king pours out the wine and water, and having drunk, replaces the cup upon the salver. The gentleman servant makes another reverence to the king, and returns the salver and all upon it to the chief of the Wine-cellars, who carries it to the sideboard.

"The carver, having taken his place before the table of

the king, presents and uncovers all the dishes, and when His Majesty tells him to do so or makes him a sign, he removes them, handing them to the plate-changer [1] or to his assistants. He changes the king's plate and napkin [2] from time to time, and cuts the meats when the king does not cut them himself." [3]

In such fashion the Grand Monarch dined in public. The ushers had orders to admit all well-dressed persons, and during the meal a steady stream of people passed slowly through the antechamber where the sovereign ate. These public dinners, however, did not occur frequently. The king usually dined alone in his bedchamber, but he supped every evening *au grand couvert* in his antechamber with his children and grandchildren.

[1] All the dishes of the king's dessert which remained untouched belonged to the plate-changer, and were sent to his office, called *serdeau,* where they reappeared at the dinners of the gentlemen servants, or at those of their valets. Some dishes, also, were sold by the valets of the *serdeau* to bourgeois families in Versailles.

[2] The napkins were kept in the *nef,* and at such times it was the king's almoner who opened and closed the *nef.*

[3] Dussieux, II, pp. 139–141.

XIV

THE KING'S STABLES

TO-DAY, disfigured and turned into barracks, the king's stables are but the ghosts of what they were. The Little Stables are occupied by a corps of engineers, and the Great Stables by a school of artillery; the courtyard of the latter is full of artillery wagons, and behind it rises the hideous brick chimney of an adjoining manufactory. Of the crowd of travelers hurrying each day across the Place d'Armes, eager to see the great château and the "glories of France" before taking an early train for Paris, probably not one in fifty gives these buildings a glance. Their glory has departed for good and all; yet they were once very splendid,—so splendid that Louis XIV took pleasure in showing them to his guests.

Erected by Mansart from 1679 to 1682, the stables stand between the three stately avenues that end in the Place d'Armes. Viewed from the entrance to the courtyards of the château, the Great Stables and the Avenue de St. Cloud are on the left, and the Little Stables and the Avenue de Sceaux upon the right, while between the stables the spacious Avenue de Paris, with its double row of trees on either side, stretches to the east. The buildings are of equal size, and each had five courtyards, four behind and one in front. The courtyards in front are much larger than the others and are separated from the Place d'Armes by gilded railings,[1] and the

[1] The present railings date from the Restoration. The original railings, decorated with gilded trophies, were very beautiful.

buildings about them are in the form of a half-circle in the center, flanked by wings with pavilions. Let us examine the service of the Stables as it existed under Louis XIV.

The Stables and the royal stud of St. Léger were in charge of the grand equerry of France, who was called, for short, Monsieur le Grand. He had under his orders the first equerry of the Great Stables, three equerries ordinary, the gentlemen of the horse, the state sword-bearers, thirty heralds at arms, pursuivants at arms, train-bearers and cloak-bearers, forty-six pages with their governor and tutor, forty-six foot-valets, eight quartermasters, numberless grooms, coachmen, and farriers, twelve trumpeters, twelve hautboys, eight fife-players, drums, cornets, couriers, tailors, saddlers, harness-makers, doctors, veterinary surgeons, kitchen officials, laundry servants, etc. The grand equerry regulated all the expenses of the Great Stables, and received the oath of all the persons who served under him. When the king made a state entry into a town the grand equerry rode before the sovereign, carrying the royal sword in a scabbard of blue velvet. At the death of the king all the horses of the Stable and of the stud became the property of the grand equerry. Under Louis XIV the Great Stables held three hundred horses, the saddle-horses of the king, of the princes of the blood, and of the couriers.

The first equerry, called for short Monsieur le Premier, commanded the Little Stables, which contained the carriages, the calèches, the sedan-chairs, and the wheel-chairs for the park. Attached to the service of these stables were three equerries, thirty-two pages, fifteen foot-valets, twenty equerries who followed the king to the war or the chase when he went in a coach, and many grooms, coachmen, postilions, and porters. The carriage-horses were kept at the Little Stables, and in 1712 the king had there twenty-five beautiful teams of ten horses each. Monsieur le Premier quarreled

continually with Monsieur le Grand, who considered that in virtue of his office he had the right to give orders at the Little Stables as well as at the Great.

In December, 1682, the king, accompanied by Monseigneur, visited his new stables, which had just been completed, and was well pleased with them; beyond that, no details are given. But in 1686, in connection with the visit of the ambassadors of Siam to the royal stables, the *Mercure Galant* gives the following description: "The ambassadors entered the Little Stables by the gate of the railing of the Place Royale, and were received at the door of the Stables by M. le Marquis de Beringhen,[1] the first equerry of the king. He was attended by M. de Cabanac and two other equerries, by the governor of the pages, and by many nobles, the others being at the chase with Monseigneur. There were also many foot-valets and a very large number of people in livery.

"After the ambassadors and M. de Beringhen had saluted one another and the usual compliments had been made, they entered the Stables in two ranks, and the ambassadors were first shown five teams of ten horses each, among which they remarked the black horses of Spain, the bays of Brandebourg, which the Elector of Brandebourg had presented to the king, the dappled grays, very noble animals from the stud of the Comte d'Oldenbourg, the spotted horses of Poland, and others with rare and beautiful skins. All were in white bridles adorned with red ribbons, and the ambassadors admired not only their bearing and spirit, but even more the beauty of their skins. Passing then to the stalls of the saddle-horses of Monseigneur, the ambassadors found a large number of very handsome horses, both of France and of England. These, like the carriage-horses, wore white bridles adorned with red ribbons.

"The ambassadors were taken afterward to the saddle-

[1] Pronounced Bélingan.

room of Monseigneur, which contains five large cases filled with saddles and harness. In the center case are lances, darts, bridles of silver and silver-gilt, and everything that is most rich in harness of this sort. The other cases contain housings, holsters, crupper-cloths, French saddles enriched with all kinds of embroidery, English saddles, and many very splendid housings used at the promenades with the ladies. Around the room stand triangular saddle-posts on which the saddles of Monseigneur's riding-horses are always ready, and above them are pegs with the bridles and the names of the horses to which the saddles and bridles belong. There is also another saddle-room for the horses of the suite.

"The ambassadors were then taken to view the teams which they had not already seen, and found all the stalls filled with very handsome horses whose size and height surprised them. They measured some, particularly those composing the team used at the state entry of an ambassador, with a magnificent carriage, painted and gilded, and lined with crimson velvet bordered with gold. The team for this carriage is composed of twelve horses. They measured others also, and found them very large and beautiful, especially the dappled gray horses of the body-guards. When they had seen all the teams, they were shown the riding-horses of His Majesty, all in bridles adorned with red ribbons, forty-eight in number, and for the most part horses of France and of England.

"The ambassadors were shown next the king's saddle-room, which is large and very beautiful, and contains a quantity of cases filled with splendid housings and saddles; one saddle especially of violet velvet embroidered with gold aroused their admiration. There are saddle-posts here, as in the saddle-room of Monseigneur, and a large number of bridles adorned with silver or with silver-gilt. In addition, they were taken to see the other saddle-rooms

which contain the trappings of the horses of the officers of the king.

"They counted more than six hundred horses at the Little Stables. The number of carriages and calèches is in proportion, and all very rich. They are for the king, for Monseigneur, for Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne, and for their suite. The state carriage of His Majesty is of extraordinary magnificence, and the harness extremely rich. Among the calèches there is one belonging to the king with room for sixteen persons.

"On the same day the ambassadors visited the Great Stables. The grand equerry, M. le Comte de Brionne, received them there, accompanied by his equerries, under-equerries, the governors of the pages, many others officers, fifty or sixty foot-valets, and a very large number of people in livery. The ambassadors were the more surprised to see so many people in livery since they had already seen at the Little Stables a number which appeared to them infinite. They remarked that there were few sovereigns in Europe who could boast as many officials in their entire households as the King of France had in his stables alone. They made the tour of the stables and saw more than two hundred saddle-horses, decked with ribbons like those of the Little Stables. Among them are many from the stud of the King of Spain, and others from Italy and Barbary, which His Majesty has for his own use in time of war. There are also one hundred very fine English hunters which the king keeps for the chase. The ambassadors were shown likewise the saddle-rooms. You can imagine them. They are the king's, and everything belonging to that monarch is magnificent." [1]

Louis XIV was delighted to show his stables. On the 11th of July, 1691, His Majesty brought the exiled King and Queen of England to see them, and James remarked that he

[1] Dussieux, II, pp. 156–160.

had never seen so many beautiful English horses together. In 1697 the king conducted there the young Duchesse de Bourgogne, the Papal Nuncio, and many ambassadors; in 1704 it was the turn of the Duke of Mantua. The riding-school of the Great Stables was the scene of numerous fêtes, which will be mentioned in a chapter devoted to that subject. It remains now, before passing to the kennels and the hunting-train, to say a word concerning the king's pages.

THE PAGES

The pages of the Chamber and those of the two Stables belonged to the nobility. They were instructed in all the arts of horsemanship, in the manual of arms and in military manœuvers, in dancing and in gymnastic exercises. They had also a governor and tutors, who taught them in mathematics, history, and geography. The duties of these pages were numerous. They followed the king to the army and were attached to his service and to those of his aides-de-camp. In the evening, carrying tapers of white wax or torches, they lighted the king's path in the palace and out of it. The *Etat de la France* (1712) furnishes the following details:

"When the king goes to shoot, four pages of the Great Stables are sent to His Majesty, and they call them the four ordinaries. They follow the king and take charge of his dogs. Six pages from the Little Stables follow also. If any ladies go with the king, pages from the Great Stables accompany the ladies. The six pages of the Little Stables have the honor of carrying His Majesty's guns, and the game shot by the king is frequently distributed among them. In other hunts, when there are ladies mounted on horses from the Little Stables, a page of the Little Stables accompanies each lady.

"Whenever the king drives at night in a carriage with

Equestrian Statue of Louis XIV in the Royal Courtyard, Versailles

six or eight horses, as in returning from Marly to Versailles, four pages of the Little Stables ride in front of and beside the carriage, bearing torches."

The pages [1] were picturesque figures in the life of the court. These young sprigs of the nobility, graceful and gallant, gorgeously appareled, served at all times and seasons, at the hunts, at the fêtes, at the ceremonies, at the collations in the park, everywhere. They had youth and hope and ambition; they knew the etiquette and the intrigues of their world, and they made their way. But those to whom fortune granted a partial realization of their dreams, who became grand seigneurs with places and pensions, and flatterers and enemies, and had learned in the process the vanity and inanity of the life, must have looked back regretfully at times to those happy, hopeful days of yore, when as royal pages, full of the joy of the present and careless of all else, they flung themselves upon their spirited horses and galloped away to the king's hunt.

[1] From the documents preserved at the National Archives, and at the Archives of the préfecture of Seine-et-Oise, an interesting monograph could be written upon the royal pages.

XV

THE KENNELS AND THE HUNTING-TRAIN

THE kennels and the stables for the equipages of the chase were on the Avenue de Paris behind the Great Stables. The hôtel of the grand huntsman, built in 1670, and the kennels, constructed in 1685, were handsome and spacious buildings, but they exist no longer. Their destruction, however, is a matter of small moment, for the brick and stone which housed the dogs and equipages are not needed to reconstruct the organization of the royal hunting-train.

Since the chase held the first rank among the pleasures of the king, the service of the hunting-train occupied a very important position in His Majesty's household. At the head of the service was the grand huntsman of France, for many years M. de la Rochefoucauld, and later the Comte de Toulouse. Then came the captain-general of the toils, the grand falconer, and the grand master of the wolf-hounds. The grand huntsman had under his orders 16 lieutenants, 48 gentlemen of the hunt, many pages, more than 100 valets of the hounds, and many whippers-in and farriers. The lace on the coats of all the officers of the hunting-train was more or less rich, according to their rank.

As for the chase itself, it was composed of two main divisions—namely, the hunting and the shooting. Under the first head came the chase of the stag, which held the chief place, and then those of the roebuck, the fallow-deer, the wild

boar, the wolf, the hare, and the fox. Under the second head came the shooting of small game, divided into the chase with the pointers, the chase with the setters, and the chase with the beagles. Finally there was the falconry. Each one of these various kinds of hunting and shooting had a service of its own and particular equipages. The equipages for the chase of the stag were at the kennels, but those for the chase of the wild boar were kept at the Hôtel du Vautrait, in the Rue du Vautrait. In addition the wolf hunting-train of the king put up in the Rue St. Pierre, while in the Rue du Bel-Air was installed the wolf hunting-train of Monseigneur.

The country all about Paris was a game preserve, and the king and the princes hunted in the woods of Versailles, of Marly, and of Meudon, in the parks of those châteaux, in the forests of St. Germain, of Fontainebleau, and of Vincennes, in the plain of St. Denis, in the Bois de Boulogne, at Choisy, at Chantilly, at Compiègne, at Rambouillet, at St. Léger, etc. "When they hunt in the park of Versailles," says the Palatine,[1] "they cross neither waste lands nor plowed fields, but when they hunt elsewhere they pass frequently over the fields. If damage is done, the peasants ask for remuneration in writing. An estimate is made, and they pay them."

The packs of hounds were numerous while M. de la Rochefoucauld was grand huntsman, but were increased later when the Comte de Toulouse had replaced him. The most beautiful packs were those of the king, of his sons, Monseigneur, the Duc du Maine, and the Comte de Toulouse, of the Chevalier de Lorraine, of M. de Bouillon, and of the Duc de Vendôme. These packs together numbered more than a thousand dogs.

As has been said, the grand huntsman of France was at the head of all the hunting-train. The duties of the captain-

[1] Elizabeth-Charlotte, Duchesse d'Orléans.

general of the toils, of the grand master of the wolf-hounds, and of the grand falconer were as follows:

The captain-general of the toils had under his orders 8 lieutenants, 8 gentlemen of the hunt, 4 whippers-in, 6 valets of the hounds, 8 guards of the greyhounds, 20 archers, 16 guards of the toils, 15 hunters and rangers, and 40 dogs. It was the duty of the captain-general to take in the toils in all the forests of France stags, deer, boars, foxes, and other animals to restock the parks of the royal palaces. He had also the general direction of the chase of the wild boar. The game was sometimes attacked in the inclosure of the toils, and the *Mercure Galant* gives an account of a grand hunt of that sort which took place at Fontainebleau on the 30th of October, 1707: "The toils were placed in the glades of Bombon. In the inclosure there were a large number of stags, wild boars, roebucks, and foxes. The court arrived there. The king, the Queen of England,[1] her son, Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne, and Madame[2] were in the same carriage, and all the princesses and the ladies followed in the carriages and calèches of the king. A very large number of noblemen on horseback accompanied the carriages. Within the inclosure there were platforms, arranged with seats covered with tapestry for the ladies, and many riding-horses for the nobles who wished to attack the game with swords or darts. They killed sixteen of the largest beasts, and some foxes. Mgr. le Duc de Berry slew several. This chase gave much pleasure on account of the brilliancy of the spectacle, and the large number of nobles who surrounded the toils. A multitude of people had climbed into the trees, and by their diversity they formed an admirable background." As a rule, the wild boar was sought in the forest with the boar hunting-train. The person who killed the boar was entitled

[1] The wife of James II, then in exile.
[2] The Duchesse d'Orléans, wife of Monsieur.

to the head, and brought an ear to the king on the point of his sword, in the Persian fashion.

The grand master of the wolf-hounds directed the chase of the wolf, having under his orders 2 lieutenants, 10 whippers-in, 20 valets of the hounds, 4 guards, and a stable of horses for the chase of the wolf. There were also under his orders 6 lieutenants of the wolf hunting-train in the provinces. The great wolf-hunter of the time was Monseigneur.

As for the falconry, so much in fashion under Louis XIII, it was not to the taste of the Grand Monarch. He hunted in that way from time to time, however, occasionally on horseback, usually in a calèche. But though the king took little interest in the sport, the service was complete and splendidly appointed. In 1713 the Elector of Bavaria, who delighted in that form of hunting, found the king's equipages for the falconry magnificent. The grand falconer had under his orders 8 captains, 7 lieutenants, 25 gentlemen of the falconry, 56 whippers-in, 2 valets of the spaniels, 2 guards, a commissary, and 2 farriers. He had control also of the birds used in the chase, the hawks, gerfalcons, tercelets, etc. There were two casts of hawks for the kite, one for the heron, one for the crow, one for the partridge; and in the chase of the heron and partridge, dogs as well as birds were used. The hawking-train kept 40 birds and 18 spaniels.

Thus in an establishment so thoroughly equipped and organized, all forms of the chase furnished the sovereign with a brilliant retinue, but neither the wolf-hunt nor the boar-hunt could vie in splendor with the flashing cortège that swept behind the King of France to chase the stag.

After a stag-hunt the quarry was usually held by torchlight. At Versailles this took place, under Louis XIV, in the Cour des Cerfs,[1] from the balcony of which the king and

[1] An inner court of the palace between the state apartments of the king and his private apartments.

the princes watched it. The quarry was held in the following manner: "When His Majesty had made known his intentions on the subject, all the huntsmen with their horns and in hunting-dress came to the place where the quarry was to be made. On the arrival of the king, who was also in hunting-dress, the grand huntsman, who had received two wands of office, gave one to the king, and retained the other. The dogs were held under the whip about the carcass of the stag until the grand huntsman, having received the order from the king, gave the sign with his wand that they should be set at liberty. The horns sounded, and the huntsmen, who while the hounds were held under the whip had cried, 'Back, dogs! Back!' shouted now, '*Hallali, valets! Hallali!*' When the quarry had been made, that is to say, when the flesh had been torn from the bones, a valet took the *forhu*,[1] and called the dogs, crying, '*Tayaut, tayaut!*' and threw the *forhu* into the midst of the pack, where it was devoured at once. At this instant the fanfares redoubled, and finished by sounding the retreat. The king returned the wand to the grand huntsman, who at the head of all the huntsmen followed His Majesty." [2]

Louis XIV made many fine roads about Marly, Versailles, St. Germain, and Fontainebleau in order that he might hunt the stag more easily. These were the only roads in France which were kept in good repair.

[1] The belly of the stag, washed and placed on the end of a forked stick.
[2] Dussieux, II, pp. 182–183.

II

THE PARK

I

THE GARDENS

MORE than two centuries have passed since the gardens of Versailles, in all their splendor, astonished the Doge of Genoa and the ambassadors of Siam. They are still magnificent, but many features have been destroyed or changed or modified since the days of Louis XIV. The first design of the gardens was not that of Le Nôtre, but the plan of Lemercier and of Boyceau, many of whose ideas were preserved and enlarged and rendered more beautiful by Louis XIV. But though all was not the work of Le Nôtre, the personality of that genius, nevertheless, dominated all throughout its length and breadth, as he has dominated French gardening ever since, and the gardens may be referred to rightly as his creation. The man himself merits a word.

André Le Nôtre first attracted the king's attention at Fouquet's Château of Vaux, where he had designed a garden whose beauty and novelty stamped its creator as a man of talent and a master of his art. After the fall of Fouquet, Louis took Le Nôtre into his service and intrusted to him the gardens of Versailles. With insight and imagination of the first order, with boundless enthusiasm for his art, Le Nôtre took up the task in which he was to prove himself the greatest landscape-architect of his time, perhaps of all time. Possessing in a preëminent degree the "sense of the beautiful in space" and the "sense of elegance in majesty and regu-

larity," he saw, as in a vision, what no other man had seen, the gardens of the new Versailles, the gardens of a Sun King, whom all the Arts united to celebrate; and when he had drawn his plans, he brought the Grand Monarch to the terrace, that Louis, too, might see. All was to be created; all existed only in the mind of the great gardener and on the papers which he held in his hand. Saint-Yenne relates the scene:

"When Le Nôtre had traced out his ideas, he brought Louis XIV to the spot to judge the distribution of the principal parts and their ornamentation. He began with the two grand basins which are on the terrace in front of the château, with their magnificent decorations. He explained next his idea of the double flight of stairs, which is opposite the center of the palace, adorned with yew-trees and with statues, and gave in detail all the pieces that were to enrich the space which it included. He passed then to the *Allée du Tapis Vert*, and to that grand place where we see the head of the canal, of which he described the size and shape, and at the extremities of whose arms he placed Trianon and the Menagerie. At each of the grand pieces whose position Le Nôtre marked, and whose future beauties he described, Louis XIV interrupted him, saying, 'Le Nôtre, I give you twenty thousand francs.' This magnificent approbation was so frequently repeated that it annoyed Le Nôtre, whose soul was as noble and disinterested as that of his master was generous. At the fourth interruption he stopped, and said brusquely to the king, 'Sire, Your Majesty shall hear no more. I should ruin you.'"[1]

Does not that anecdote display two of Le Nôtre's most prominent characteristics, love of his art for the art's sake, and simple frankness? As he was at the beginning of his career, so he remained to the end, modest, frank, honest, and de-

[1] L'Ombre du Grand Colbert, 1752, after Dussieux, II, p. 198.

By permission of Braun, Clement & Co.

André Le Nôtre

voted to his art. The king, who loved his talent, and even more the character of the man himself, ennobled him and gave him the order of St. Michel. In addition to his great work at Versailles he designed the gardens of Trianon, of Marly, of St. Cloud, of Clagny, of Chantilly, of Meudon, of St. Germain, of the Tuileries, etc. His world courted him and made much of him; he passed from triumph to triumph, but remained unspoiled. "He was," says Saint-Simon, "of a charming simplicity and truthfulness. . . . A month before Le Nôtre's death, the king, who liked to see him and to make him talk, led him into the gardens of Marly, and, on account of his great age, placed him in a wheeled chair by the side of his own. Upon this Le Nôtre said, 'Ah, my poor father, if you were living and could see a simple gardener like me, your son, wheeled along in a chair by the side of the greatest king in the world, nothing would be wanting to my joy!'"[1] Le Nôtre had a beautiful apartment at the Grand Commun and a lodging at the Tuileries. He died in 1700, at the age of eighty-seven, retaining all his faculties and his good taste to the last.[2] But the man was greater than his work. Here is his epitaph. "Le Nôtre," says Saint-Simon, "was esteemed and loved by everybody." To have that true in a court like that of the Grand Monarch, to have it written by one of the proudest and most sarcastic of French noblemen, was not that a marvel, surpassing the creation of the gardens of Versailles?

It was easier to erect the Château of Versailles than to lay out the gardens. The difficulties attending the construction of the latter were very great, and, aside from the large number of men and horses required to make the excavations and to rear the vast terraces, the chief obstacles to be

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 169.

[2] Le Nôtre died in September, 1700, and was succeeded as controller-general of the king's buildings and gardens by his nephew, Desgots.

surmounted were the lack of large trees and the scarcity of water.

In the time of Louis XIII there were but two ornamental groves in the garden, the *bosquet du Dauphin* and the *bosquet de la Girandole;* the rest was wooded, with walks cut here and there. To carry out the plans of Le Nôtre it was necessary to destroy the trees in the vicinity of the château, and in the replanting of the gardens the king was not content to have young trees. At certain points he wished to obtain an immediate result, and not to wait for years. Thus, very frequently, especially in 1680, they transplanted large trees, bringing them from Compiègne, from Flanders, from the mountains of Dauphiné, and from the forests of Normandy. In 1688 they purchased in Artois, for the sum of 16,949 livres, twenty-five thousand trees, which, in spite of the difficulties of transportation over bad roads, were brought in wagons; many perished, but they were replaced at once by others. The director of the planting of the trees in the park and avenues of Versailles was the Sieur Ballon.

But the question of the water-supply was the most serious problem to be solved in connection with the gardens. The director of the waters, or commander of the fountains, to give him the title then in use, was Pierre de Francine. He and his assistant Denis placed the conduits for the water to supply the basins, the bosquets, the cascades, and the jets. In that particular the resources of Versailles were limited, and as the king constantly changed his fountains and increased their number, the work of Francine was soon found insufficient. Louis XIV and Colbert then sought other means to obtain the necessary volume of water. Riquet had a plan to bring the waters of the Loire to Versailles, but, on examination, the project was found to be impossible. Another scheme, which unfortunately was adopted, was that of Vauban and Lahire to bring the waters of the Eure. "At the

Façade of the Château from the Terrace

lever of the king," says Dangeau, under date of October 19, 1684, "they talked much of the river Eure, which the king wishes to bring to Versailles." Thirty thousand soldiers were employed on the works at the Eure, and in July, 1686, the king reviewed twenty-two battalions that were engaged there. A canal was dug and a large aqueduct reared, but the war of 1688 and the state of the finances stopped the enterprise. This work, which proved useless in the end, cost the lives of several thousand soldiers, who caught contagion from the upturned earth, and nearly forty millions of francs. But even before the project for the Eure failed, water was being sought in other directions. The machine of Marly was constructed from 1681 to 1687, and about the same time Picard and Romer had in operation a vast system of trenches and aqueducts to drain the plateau of Satory of the water which collected there from rain and from melting snow. This water was drained into six ponds, those of St. Hubert, Mesnil-St. Denis, Trou-Salé, Martinière, Saclay, and St. Quentin, from which it was brought to the reservoirs of Montbauron and of Gobert, and from there, by means of conduits, to Versailles; to the park, for the fountains, and to the town, for the needs of the inhabitants. These great works were very costly, but they were successful. The water they furnished was better and more healthful than that supplied by the machine of Marly; and even to-day, after more than two centuries, the works are still in use and are kept in good repair.

At the present time there are 607 jets of water in the gardens, but under Louis XIV there were 1400. "Nothing is more surprising," says La Martinière, "than the immense quantity of water thrown up by the fountains when they all play together at the promenades of the king. These jets are capable of using up a river." In fact, so much water was needed for all the fountains to play at the same time that this

took place only at great fêtes, or when some ambassador or foreigner of the first rank visited the château. As a rule, in the summer and on the days when the king was at Versailles, only the fountains on the terrace, and those which could be seen from the windows of the château, played from ten o'clock in the morning until eight in the evening.

Under the direction of Lebrun and Mignard, ninety-five sculptors worked on the statues and on the other decorations of the gardens, and in addition to the works of the French artists the king ordered from Italy a very large number of statues, antiques or copies from the antique. The taste of the age turned to the mythology of Greece and Rome, and the gardens of Versailles became a new Olympus.

When the gardens were finished, the king opened them to the public, who were allowed to promenade there freely, but in a short time it was found necessary to abandon this plan. The crowd injured many of the vases and statues, and His Majesty in his walks was surrounded and annoyed by a multitude of people who came from all directions, above all from Paris. Therefore the guards received orders to close the gates and admit only the personages of the court and those who accompanied them.

II

THE TERRACE, THE FOUNTAINS AND BOSQUETS

SAINT-SIMON was very unjust in his description of Versailles: "The gardens astonish by their magnificence, but cause regret by their bad taste. You are introduced to the freshness of the shade only by a vast torrid zone, at the end of which there is nothing for you but to mount or descend, and with the hill, which is very short, terminate the gardens."[1] That is all he can find to say of a spot where Le Nôtre surpassed himself, and where the Grand Monarch spent so many millions. If Versailles had shared the fate of Marly it would be more difficult to disprove Saint-Simon's statement, but to-day the gardens themselves are the best answer to his absurdity.

THE TERRACE

The vast terrace in front of the château is ornamented with two large basins, whose marble borders support splendid bronze groups, representing various rivers of France. Designed by Regnaudin, Tuby, Coyzevox, and Lehongre, they were cast by Keller, and are among the finest works of art at Versailles. The groups of children which adorn the basins are also beautiful. In the light of the setting sun, when the green of their rust is gilded, all these bronzes are superb. In addition to the basins, the terrace has two fountains, that

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 369.

at the first glance might escape notice in the multitude of objects which are seen on all sides. These fountains, the cabinets of Diana and of Pont du Jour, stand to the right and left of the great staircase that leads to the parterre of Latona. They are cabinets of verdure in the Italian style, containing square basins of red-and-white marble, decorated with bronze groups of animals which were cast by Keller in 1687. Beside each cabinet are three marble statues, and of these the most beautiful is the "Diana" of Desjardins. Holding her bow aloft, the goddess of the chase advances, full of life and grace and joy, a triumphant deity, demanding adoration, one of the most charming figures in the Olympus at Versailles.

Advance to the great staircase, and the gardens in all their beauty appear before you, stretching to the west. In the foreground is the vast and splendid parterre of Latona, with its fountains, its flowers, and its statues; beyond it the Royal Allée, with its closely cut green carpet, and its long lines of silent statues, banked by the heavy foliage of the adjoining groves, slopes gently to the great basin in the distance where Apollo sits enthroned in his chariot; behind Apollo lie the placid waters of the grand canal.

THE PARTERRE OF LATONA

This parterre contains three fountains. The principal one, the fountain of Latona, existed in the time of Louis XIII, though not in its present form. Latona, having at her feet her children, Apollo and Diana, implores Jupiter to punish the peasants who have insulted her, and the god changes them to frogs. These gilded frogs throw more than fifty jets of water which cross above and beside the figure of Latona, producing a beautiful effect. All the sculptures of this fountain are the work of the brothers Marsy. The two

The Fountain and Parterre of Latona

smaller fountains, called the basins of the Lizards, also the work of Marsy, are decorated with figures in gilded lead, and placed in ornamental grass-plots, bordered by beds of flowers.

Passing down the allée of Latona, we come at the end of the parterre to the large half-moon which precedes the Royal Allée or Tapis Vert. The Grand Monarch had written an itinerary[1] which the officers of his Household followed in conducting visitors through the gardens, and at this point the king's guests were stopped that they might admire the view. Therefore let us pause for a moment at the royal view-point, for though much has been changed in other parts, we still see to-day from this spot the gardens as Louis himself saw them. To the east, beyond the brilliant parterre of Latona, with its fountains, its flowers, and its orange-trees, rise the vine-covered walls of the terraces, with their spacious flights of steps and their vividly green clipped yews. Above the great staircase appears the stately façade of the château. Time has turned the stone to a soft yellow color with which the green yews on the terrace harmonize admirably. The trophies and vases, which were removed from the balustrade of the roof under the Empire, have been replaced as they were in the reign of Louis XIV. Turn to the west and survey the Royal Allée, the basin of Apollo, and the grand canal, or look to the north to the allée of Ceres, or to the south to that of Bacchus, and you realize the harmony that existed between Mansart and Le Nôtre in the decoration of the château and in the plan of the gardens.

THE GRAND CANAL

The grand canal, the main body of which has a length of something over three quarters of a mile, is constructed in the

[1] This itinerary has been published by M. Arthur Mangin in his Jardins, 1867.

form of a cross. Trianon is at the extremity of the north arm, and at the extremity of the south arm the Menagerie stood in the time of Louis XIV. Work was begun in 1667, but the canal was not completed until 1680. It was intended not merely as an ornamental sheet of water to prolong the view from the windows of the château, but to play a part in the fêtes of the court. The king kept on it carved and gilded boats and galleys, decked with red-and-white streamers and hangings fringed with gold. Not content with them, however, His Majesty ordered a ship of war for the canal. This ship carried thirty-two small guns, carved by Marsy at a cost of 20,000 livres, and the king, going on board for the first time in June, 1686, sailed peacefully to Trianon. In addition there were the gilded gondolas, the first of which the Republic of Venice had presented to Louis XIV in 1679. The king bought others, and secured the services of fourteen Venetian gondoliers,[1] who were dressed in crimson and lodged at the head of the canal, in the buildings which are still called "Little Venice." Three companies of bargemen, commanded by the Chevalier Paulin, were attached to the service of the boats on the canal, some two hundred and sixty men in all, and of these sixty were always ready at a moment's notice whenever the king or the courtiers wished to embark. Such embarkations were frequent in the summer. The king more than once took supper on his ship, and the Duchesse de Bourgogne often remained in her gondola listening to music from two o'clock in the morning until dawn.

The grand canal lies outside the gardens, in the park which includes Trianon and the Menagerie and much wooded land besides. As for the gardens proper, they are divided by the great terrace, the parterre of Latona, the Royal Allée, and the basin of Apollo, into two chief parts, that of the north and that of the south, each containing many fountains and

[1] They were sent back to Venice by the regent in 1717.

bosquets. Let us take first the garden of the north, in which are the parterre du Nord, the Allée d'Eau, the bosquets of the Arch of Triumph and of the Three Fountains, the basin of the Dragon, the basin of Neptune, the basins of Ceres and of Flora, the bosquets of the Star, of the Obelisk, of the Dauphin, of the Domes, and of the Giant.

THE PARTERRE DU NORD

In this parterre, which lies beneath the windows of the north wing of the château, one misses Le Nôtre's hand. It was designed by Claude Perrault in 1664, and in spite of its vases and flowers, and its two handsome basins of the Crowns, it is dull and heavy, almost lugubrious. For some reason the sun seems to shine less brightly here than elsewhere at Versailles. Through it the courtiers passed continually to reach other points, but it is doubtful if they lingered. The fountains at the end of the central allée—namely, the Pyramid and the Cascade—are the most inartistic in the gardens, especially the Pyramid. Though its lead Tritons, which were designed by Perrault, were formerly gilded, it could not even then have been a thing of beauty. The wonder is that the Grand Monarch, who was continually changing his gardens, preserved this ugly fountain in the midst of his magnificence. The Cascade is not much better, although it is decorated with a bas-relief by Girardon, representing Diana and her Nymphs, which has some merit. But the parterre du Nord is, after all, only a fraction of the great plan, and though some of its details leave much to be desired, it does not mar the harmony of the whole.

From the parterre du Nord three allées lead down to the great basin of Neptune. The central allée, called the Allée d'Eau, which separates the bosquet of the Arch of Triumph from that of the Three Fountains, takes its name from the

fact that it is adorned with twenty-two small fountains, placed in two lines, each composed of a group of bronze children who support a marble basin. These bronze groups, the work of Duval and of Langlois, show great variety in design and ornamentation, and yet the effect of the whole is disappointing, except when the waters play. In the time of Louis XIV there were yew-trees in vases of gilded copper between all the fountains, and such a combination of green and gold would make the allée much more attractive than it is at present. The tall trees and heavy foliage in the groves of the Arch of Triumph and of the Three Fountains form now the chief charm. At the foot of the Allée d'Eau is the basin of the Dragon, which is handsome and of good size, but appears as nothing in contrast to the huge basin of Neptune that lies behind it.

THE BASIN OF NEPTUNE

Here again is the hand of Le Nôtre. The basin of Neptune, called at first the Grand Cascades, was constructed from 1679 to 1684, in accordance with his designs. This immense basin, surrounded on the side toward the château by a handsome wall of stone, and on the other by an amphitheater of turf and trees, a vast half-circle, in the center of which stands a marble statue of Renown, is simple in conception and imposing from its size. The richly carved lead vases which adorn the wall were gilded under the Grand Monarch, and each throws a jet of water to a great height. Dangeau tells us that His Majesty saw the waters play here for the first time on the 17th of May, 1685, and that he was quite content. However, Neptune had not then appeared in the basin which now bears his name; for the large groups of Neptune, the Ocean, and the Tritons, which ornament the base of the wall at present, were not put in place until 1739,

The Royal Allée from the Basin of Apollo

in the reign of Louis XV. This majestic basin at the foot of the Allée d'Eau is a striking contrast to Perrault's ugly Pyramid at the head of it. Le Nôtre knew what was fitting for the gardens of a Sun King.

THE BOSQUETS OF THE ARCH OF TRIUMPH AND OF THE THREE FOUNTAINS

These bosquets are now ghosts of what they were and wrecks of the old Versailles. They stand on either side of the Allée d'Eau, the Arch of Triumph being between the allée and the palace. The gates of the Three Fountains are closed to the public, but there is little to see, for it is simply a thick grove of fine trees, with hedges and traces of the former basins. In Louis's day it contained a charming allée with an immense number of small jets of water, leaping from basins at the sides and forming an arch of water overhead, beneath which one could walk without being wet. The Arch of Triumph, however, was one of the marvels of the old gardens. This bosquet is open to the public, but nothing remains of its original decoration save the fountain of France at the entrance. France sits triumphant in her car, with Spain and Germany at her chariot-wheels, for this fountain, which was the work of Tuby and Coyzevox, has been carefully restored. The fountain of the Arch of Triumph, which gave the grove its name, and the fountains of Victory and Glory, that stood on either side, have disappeared long ago. They were restored in 1732, but in 1787 they were again in a bad way, and in 1801 they were destroyed. The fountain of Victory was at the right of the bosquet as one ascended toward the Arch of Triumph. Above a wealth of sculpture, Victory, trumpet in hand, stood on a globe ornamented with three fleurs-de-lis. This fountain was the work of Mazeline. Opposite to it was the fountain of Glory, designed by Lebrun and executed by Coyzevox. The Arch of Triumph, which

filled the end of the bosquet, was placed on an estrade with marble steps, and was preceded by four lofty obelisks of gilded iron in which the water leaped and fell in sheets of crystal. The fountain itself was composed of three porticos of gilded iron, with large jets in the center of each, while seven jets leaped up from the basins above the porticos, and all the waters rushed down over the steps of marble. In addition twenty-two vases at the sides of the bosquet threw jets into the air. "Without having seen it," says Blondel, "it is impossible to imagine the wonderful effect produced by this decoration." [1] We may well believe him. All this has vanished, and to-day triumphant France gazes at nothing, or next to nothing, a marble boar on a pedestal and a mass of foliage.

To give an account in detail of all the fountains and bosquets in the gardens of Versailles and of the many changes made in them by Louis XIV, or of those made by others since his day, would extend this chapter far beyond its proper limits. Words, too, convey no impression of the size and beauty of the gardens, of long vistas, of leaping waters seen afar, of sunlight glinting through the high green vaults of stately allées, of regiments of marble statues silent and sentinel-like, of birds singing in quiet bosquets where a courtier could well fancy himself a hundred miles from court. Therefore let us glance only at the Baths of Apollo before passing to the south side of the great terrace to close this sketch of the gardens with a brief account of the parterre du Midi, the Salle de Bal, and the Colonnade.

THE BATHS OF APOLLO

This grove is next to the parterre of Latona on the north side. It was called at first the *Marais,* and was constructed

[1] Dussieux, II, p. 239.

The Basin of Neptune and the Bosquets of the Arch of Triumph and of the Three Fountains in the time of Louis XIV

from 1670 to 1676, in accordance with the plans of Madame de Montespan. While the favor of the marquise lasted, people spoke of the *Marais* as one of the marvels of the gardens, but it was undoubtedly considered less wonderful after her fall. In the center stood a large oak surrounded by an artificial marsh, bordered with reeds and grasses, and containing plants and a number of white swans. From the swans, from the reeds and grasses, and from the leaves and branches of the oak, thousands of little jets of water leaped forth, falling like fine rain upon the masses of natural vegetation that flourished amid the artificial. At the sides of the bosquet there were two tables of marble, on which a collation was served when the marquise came to her grove to see the waters play. In 1704 the king ordered Mansart to destroy the *Marais* and transform the bosquet into the Baths of Apollo.

The new bosquet contained the famous groups of sculpture of Apollo and the horses of the Sun, which had figured first at Versailles in the splendid Grotto of Thetis. That grotto once stood on the site of the vestibule of the present chapel, but had been destroyed in 1686, when Mansart built the north wing of the château. The groups were then transported to the further side of the gardens and placed in the bosquet of Renown, near the basin of Apollo, where they remained until 1704, when the Baths of Apollo replaced the *Marais*. In the new bosquet they were placed under canopies of gilded lead to protect them from rain and snow. The principal group, representing Apollo and the Nymphs, is the work of Girardon, and is very beautiful. The two smaller groups of the horses of the Sun and the Tritons were executed by Marsy and Guérin.

In 1778 the Baths of Apollo underwent an entire alteration at the hands of Hubert Robert, being remade in accordance with the taste of the day. The principal group was then

placed in the grotto adorned with columns, in which it now stands, and which was intended to represent the palace of Thetis. As far as one can judge from the pictures of Cotelle and of Silvestre, the arrangement of the groups in the time of Louis XIV was less artistic than the later design of Robert. As a rule, the changes made in the gardens of the Grand Monarch by his successors were for the worse, but this bosquet seems to have been an exception.

THE PARTERRE DU MIDI

To the south of the great terrace, under the windows of the state apartments of the queen, lies the parterre du Midi. This flower-garden is above the Orangery, and though its basins are more simple than those of the parterre du Nord, it is much more attractive than the latter. At either side of the short flight of steps leading from the terrace to the garden rests a marble sphinx, bearing on its back a Cupid in bronze. These charming bronzes are the work of Lerambert. The parterre du Midi gains much from its elevated position above the Orangery, commanding on one side a wooded landscape and the Swiss Lake beyond the road to St. Cyr, and on the other the best view of the long façade of the château. The western terrace on the side toward the gardens contains those steps of rose-colored marble which inspired Alfred de Musset to write his beautiful verses on Versailles.

In the gardens which lie to the south of the parterre of Latona and the Royal Allée are the bosquet of the Queen (called formerly the Labyrinth), the basins of Bacchus and Saturn, the Salle de Bal, the Salle des Marronniers, the bosquet of the Girandole, the Colonnade, the Mirror, and the garden of the King (called once the Île Royale). Of these only the Salle de Bal and the Colonnade will be described here.

Apollo and the Nymphs, by Girardon, in the Baths of Apollo

THE SALLE DE BAL

This bosquet occupies on the south of the parterre of Latona a position corresponding to that of the Baths of Apollo on the north. At one end is a cascade of rocks, over which the waters fall with a pleasant murmur, glittering by torchlight; above it was the orchestra, while the sides of the bosquet facing the cascade are arranged in the form of an amphitheater, with terraces of turf on which the courtiers sat when the king gave a dance in the Salle de Bal. On all sides were vases and cressets of gilded lead, some of which still remain. Under date of the 7th of May, 1685, Dangeau tells us that "Monseigneur, on returning from a wolf-hunt, gave in the Salle de Bal a grand supper to those who had followed him to the chase. The repast was very gay. On leaving the table Monseigneur went to promenade, and then he embarked on the canal."[1] On the 12th of June, 1691, after a promenade in the Orangery, Louis XIV gave to the King and Queen of England, to the Duc and Duchesse d'Orléans, to the princesses, and to the ladies of their suite, a magnificent collation in the Salle de Bal, at the close of which they went to visit many of the fountains.[2]

THE COLONNADE

The Colonnade, which was constructed from 1685 to 1688, is situated near the basin of Apollo, to the south of the Royal Allée. It is circular in form, and consists of thirty-two marble columns which support a balustrade adorned with vases. Between the columns are twenty-eight marble basins, each of which throws up a jet of water. Five steps of marble surround the circle in the center, which contains Girardon's beautiful group of Pluto and Proserpine, now much injured

[1] Dangeau.

[2] Dussieux, II, p. 261.

by time and weather. The Colonnade, like the majority of the bosquets in the gardens, served for collations during the promenades of the court. On the 16th of May, 1691, Monseigneur and the princesses came to sup in the Colonnade, which was brilliantly illuminated. This "morsel of architecture," as Saint-Simon called it, was the work of Mansart, and in this connection Saint-Simon gives a characteristic anecdote of Le Nôtre. Pope Clement X had begged Louis to lend him Le Nôtre for some months that he might improve the gardens of the Vatican. "Upon Le Nôtre's return," says Saint-Simon, "the king led him into the gardens of Versailles, and showed him what had been done in his absence. About the Colonnade he said nothing. The king pressed him to give his opinion thereupon. 'Why, Sire,' said Le Nôtre, 'what can I say? Of a mason you have made a gardener, and he has given you a sample of his trade.' The king kept silence, and everybody laughed; and it was true that this morsel of architecture, which was anything but a fountain and yet was intended to be one, was much out of place in a garden."[1] Le Nôtre was slightly jealous of Mansart, and the Duc de Saint-Simon was fond of belittling all that the king did. The Colonnade still remains, and people can judge of it for themselves. It does not seem out of place in the gardens, but at present it is closed to the public, and can be viewed only through the iron gates.

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 169.

The Colonnade

III

THE ORANGERY

THE Orangery was constructed by Mansart from 1684 to 1686, though, if we may believe Saint-Yenne, it was Le Nôtre who furnished the plans. "Louis XIV, not being satisfied with the ideas of his architects for this building, asked Le Nôtre many times to work at it. Le Nôtre excused himself always on the ground that his talent was for gardening and not for building. But the king having pressed him anew to think of it, an idea came to him one night, and he rose and traced out his design. In the morning he showed it to His Majesty, who was so well pleased that he called Mansart and ordered him to perfect Le Nôtre's plan and execute it." [1]

This large building, which supports the parterre du Midi, contains three long galleries, lighted by twelve windows. At the two ends were statues of Hercules and Mercury, and in the center a colossal marble statue of Louis XIV, clad as a Roman, a gift to the king from the Maréchal de la Feuillade. The principal entrance is the Porte Royale, opposite the allée of Bacchus, by which visitors who had obtained permission to walk among the orange-trees entered. Two royal staircases, called the *Cent-Marches* (although the number of steps in each is one hundred and three), descend from the parterre du Midi to the road to St. Cyr. Between them lies the parterre of the Orangery, with its round marble

[1] Saint-Yenne, p. 59, after Dussieux, II, p. 242.

basin and ornamental turf; in the summer season this parterre is filled with orange-trees of various sizes. Under the Grand Monarch there were some 3000 orange-trees in the Orangery, but at present there are about 1800.

The king was very fond of orange-trees; he loved their brilliant verdure, their perfume, their flowers, and their fruit. They lined the allées and groves of his gardens; they stood in tubs of silver in his Galerie des Glaces and in his state apartments; they decorated all his fêtes. His gardeners had discovered a means of keeping a certain number of them in bloom the year round, and these were taken to the château, and were replaced by others at intervals of fifteen days; so that in His Majesty's apartments the trees were always in full bloom. For his Orangery at Versailles the king purchased orange-trees wherever he could get them. He obtained them in St. Domingo and in Flanders; he paid the Duchesse de la Ferté 2200 livres for twenty; he brought them from the orangery at Fontainebleau.

Among the trees taken from the latter place was the Grand-Bourbon. According to tradition, this famous orange-tree had been planted in 1421 by a Princess of Navarre, and, after several changes of owners, came into the possession of François I, by whom it was placed at Fontainebleau. When it reached Versailles the king came to visit it, and two Grand Bourbons were then face to face. The man passed, and even his bones, torn from their tomb at St. Denis and tossed into a trench, have perished; not a pinch of his dust remains. But the tree lives and blooms and bears fruit[1]—the only Bourbon at Versailles—serene, invincible, enthroned!

[1] The Grand-Bourbon is still the greenest and most beautiful tree of the collection, and is charged at times with more than two hundred fruits. Dussieux, II, p. 244.

The Château and the Orangery

IV

THE KITCHEN-GARDEN

THE King's Kitchen-Garden, on the east side of the Swiss Lake, consisted of a large square, divided into sixteen compartments, which were separated by allées bordered by fruit-walls. In the center was a circular basin, and on the four sides were wide terraces, containing thirty-one small gardens. From each terrace a flight of steps descended to the central square. This garden was planted from 1679 to 1682, and at the head of it was the famous La Quintinie, who, like Le Nôtre, had passed from the service of Fouquet to that of the Grand Monarch. His post brought him 2000 livres, as Director of the Kitchen-Gardens of the King, and in addition he received 4000 livres gratuity.

La Quintinie had talent, and made the royal Kitchen-Garden a model for gardeners to imitate throughout Europe. His reputation at court was established by his remarkable skill in the cultivation of early fruits and vegetables. He gave the king asparagus and fresh sorrel in December; radishes, lettuce, and mushrooms in January; cauliflower in March; strawberries and peas in April; figs and melons in June. He excelled, too, in peaches; for when he found that the gardeners of Montreuil produced better peaches than he had done hitherto at Versailles, he persuaded one of them, Nicolas Pépin, to come and work in the Kitchen-Garden, and from this man he learned the secrets of Montreuil. The

king was fond of talking with his gardener, who had much knowledge, and when La Quintinie died in 1688, Louis, with that tact which never failed him, addressed the widow as follows: "Madame, you and I have suffered a loss that we can never repair."

The fruit-walls of the Kitchen-Garden furnished His Majesty with peaches, cherries, plums, apricots, pears, and grapes, but figs were cultivated more extensively than these, for they were the king's favorite fruit. All the products of the Kitchen-Garden, however, were not for the royal table. A part was set aside for the public, and in the Rue du Potager there was a small building called *Le Public,* in which several people were employed in distributing fruits and vegetables to those who came to ask for them.

While La Quintinie lived, the king went frequently to walk in his Kitchen-Garden,[1] and Dangeau tells us that on such occasions His Majesty usually permitted those who accompanied him to pluck and eat the fruit. All strangers of distinction who came to Versailles visited the garden of La Quintinie; among others the Doge of Genoa in May, 1685, and the ambassadors of Siam in October, 1686.

[1] At the present time the Kitchen-Garden has been transformed into a School of Horticulture and is kept up by the state.

V

THE MENAGERIE

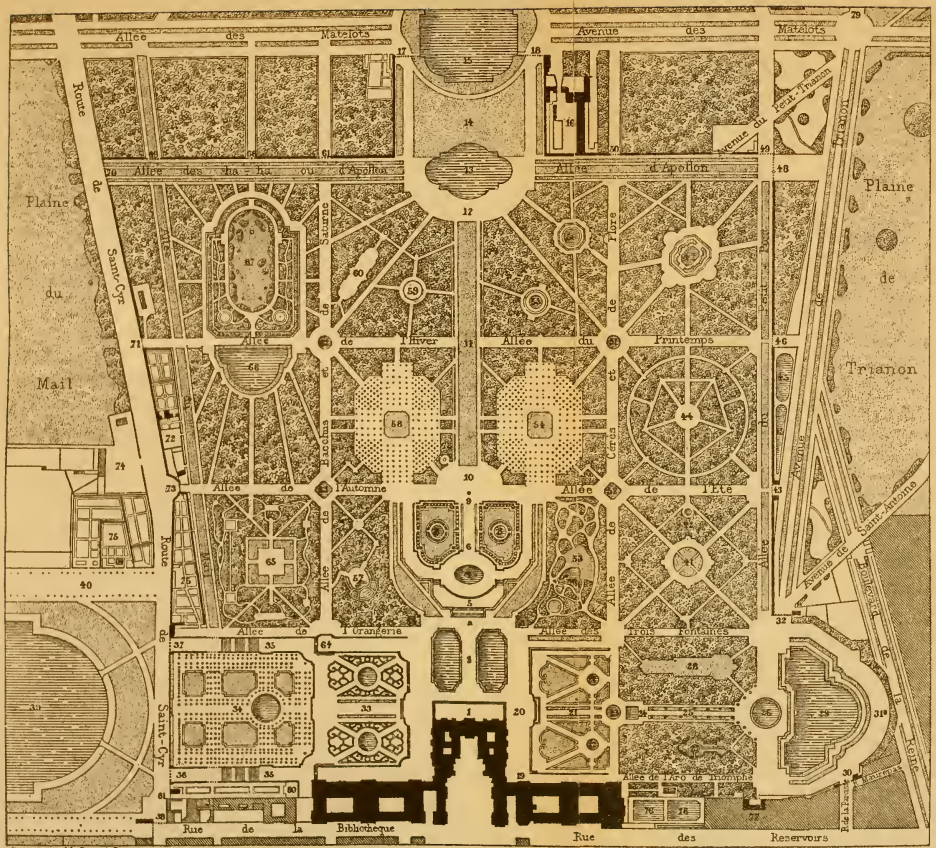
THE Menagerie, of which now only a few ruins remain, was located at the extremity of the southern arm of the grand canal. As early as 1663 the king had begun to build there, and to transform the small hunting-pavilion, erected by his father, into something more pretentious. But without enumerating the various changes which the Menagerie underwent during a period of more than twenty-five years, let us pass at once to what it was at its best.

From the principal entrance, placed at the end of the road extending through the park from the basin of Apollo, a long avenue, lined by trees and walls inclosing gardens, led to the gates of the courtyard of the château; to the right of the gates was a chapel. The small château consisted of two pavilions, projecting beyond a central portion which was almost square, and had behind it a short gallery leading to a large octagonal salon, so that the form of the whole château was very much that of the letter ⊥ reversed. In the center of the building a handsome staircase led to the apartments on the first floor, five on either side of the landing. In summer the Duchesse de Bourgogne used the apartments on the right, and in winter those on the left. The rooms on the ground floor were for servants and guards. The octagonal salon at the end of the gallery was surmounted by a dome and lighted by seven large windows, looking on

all sides on the courts of the animals. In this apartment the king often dined when he came to walk at the Menagerie. All the apartments were decorated with much taste. The chimneypieces were made of the rarest marbles and ornamented with bronzes and gilded mirrors; the salon was hung with pictures of flowers and animals painted by Desportes; Audran had adorned the ceilings; Dugoulon had carved the woodwork. There was no bedchamber, for the château was intended simply as a house in which to give a collation or a supper. A balcony with a beautiful railing of gilded iron surrounded the salon, on a level with the windows of the first floor, and from it one could see with ease the animals in their respective courts.

These courts were arranged as follows: On the right of the château came first the garden of the Duchesse de Bourgogne, at the end of which were two handsome pavilions, and between them the dairy; then followed in order the aviary and its court, the court of the pelicans, the court of the deer, the court of the ostriches, the court of the bear-pits. Behind these symmetrical courts, which faced the windows of the octagonal salon, were a number of other buildings and courts, containing a lion and other wild beasts, an extensive pigeon-house, a large court for chickens and turkeys, and a farm for cows and horses. The aviary was the finest in France; the pigeon-house held more than three thousand pigeons; and in the Menagerie there were swans, ostriches, pelicans, peacocks, herons, Egyptian ducks, rare birds of every sort, wolves, foxes, deer, gazelles, cows from Flanders and Holland, horses, lions, and an elephant.

The young Duchesse de Bourgogne loved the little château of the Menagerie, where she amused herself and as far as possible left the etiquette of the court behind her at the gates. In 1698 the king gave her the Menagerie, and had the château refurnished and redecorated in accordance with her



1. Terrace of the Château
2. Parterre d'Eau
3. Cabinet of Diana
4. Cabinet of Pont du Jour
5. Staircase of Latona
6. Parterre of Latona
7. Fountain of Latona
8. Basins of the Lizards
9. The Point of View
10. Half-moon before the Tapis Vert
11. The Royal Allée or Tapis Vert
12. Half-moon at the end of the Tapis Vert
13. Basin of Apollo
14. Allée leading to Grand Canal
15. Grand Canal
16. Little Venice
17. Railing of the Menagerie
18. Railing of Little Venice
19. Site of the Grotto of Thetis
20. Site of the Basin of the Siren
21. Parterre du Nord
22. Basins of the Crowns
23. The Pyramid
24. The Cascade
25. Allée d'Eau
26. Basin of the Dragon
27. Bosquet of the Arch of Triumph
28. Bosquet of the Three Fountains
29. Basin of Neptune
30. Railing of the Dragon
31. Statue of Renown
32. Railing of Neptune
33. Parterre du Midi
34. Orangery
35. Staircases of the Orangery
36. Railing of the first staircase
37. Railing of the second staircase
38. Railing of the Orangery
39. Swiss Lake
40. Mall
41. Théâtre d'Eau
42. Basin of the Children
43. Railing of Ceres
44. Bosquet of the Star
45. Reservoirs of Jambettes
46. Railing of Jambettes
47. Bosquet of the Obelisk
48. Railing of Apollo
49. Railing of Petit-Pont
50. Railing of Flora
51. Basin of Flora
52. Basin of Ceres
53. Baths of Apollo
54. Quinconce du Nord
55. Bosquet of the Domes
56. Bosquet of the Giant
57. Salle de Bal
58. Quinconce du Midi
59. The Colonnade
60. Salle des Marronniers
61. Railing of Saturn
62. Basin of Saturn
63. Basin of Bacchus
64. Entrance to Orangery
65. Bosquet of the Queen
66. The Mirror
67. Garden of the King
68. Railing of the Garden of the King
69. Railing of the Maids of Honor
70. Railing of the Pheasantry
71. Railing of Folichencourt
72. Folichencourt
73. Railing of the Mall
74. Le Stand
75. Garden of Flowers
76. Reservoirs
77. Pavilion of Wheeled-chairs
78. Post of Inspectors of the Park
79. Railing of Trianon
80. Little Orangery
81. Railing of Little Orangery
a. Grand Terrace

By permission of L. Bernard, Paris.

Plan of the Gardens of Versailles

ideas. She was delighted to have a domain of her own, and came there constantly to walk or to sup with her ladies. The king came also to please the Duchesse de Bourgogne. On the 12th of March, 1703, we find him there with the Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne and the Duc du Maine, and on the following day he returned, accompanied by the Dauphin, the Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne, and the Duc de Berry. He came frequently in 1704, and on the 21st of December, 1705, he walked there in a snow-storm. On the 10th of August, 1707, he showed the Menagerie in detail to the Queen of England, who had not yet seen it, and supped there the same evening with the queen, with her son, whom they called at Versailles the King of England, with the Duchesse de Bourgogne, and with the Duc de Berry. This was the last time that Louis XIV visited the Menagerie.[1]

[1] Under Louis XV and Louis XVI the Menagerie was out of favor and out of fashion, though it was still kept up. In 1793 the majority of the animals were transported to the Jardin des Plantes in Paris, and the remainder were killed.

VI

TRIANON

IN 1663 the king purchased the land and village of Trianon, near the gardens of Versailles, tore down the houses, and added the land to the royal park. In 1670 he built there, in honor of Madame de Montespan, a charming little house of porcelain, and laid out a handsome garden. It was a place in which to give collations to the court, and was in favor for some years; but in 1687 the king, who had grown weary both of the Marquise de Montespan and of the house erected in her honor, and who had married Madame de Maintenon, ordered Mansart to demolish the Trianon of porcelain and to construct a new Trianon.

This château of marble stands near the extremity of the northern arm of the grand canal, and faces the Avenue de Trianon, which runs, outside the gardens of Versailles, from the courtyard of Trianon to the basin of Neptune. It is a building in the Italian style, one story in height, and surmounted by a balustrade which, in the time of Louis XIV, was adorned with statues and vases. On approaching by the Avenue de Trianon one sees on three sides of a square courtyard the yellow walls of the château, with their pilasters of reddish marble between all the windows. To the right and left of the gates are moats, now dry, which are surrounded by stone balustrades; and in front of the balustrades stand orange-trees in tubs. Trianon is much larger than it appears to be at the first glance, for beyond the building

at the left of the main courtyard there is a second courtyard with buildings on all four sides, while the wing to the right of the main courtyard, in which the king lodged, is joined at the further end to another wing, called Trianon-sous-Bois, by a long gallery running west. Trianon-sous-Bois and the gallery, therefore, have the form of the letter L, the gallery being the base. Thus the part of the château which one sees on approaching the courtyard is not more than one fourth of Trianon.

Early in 1687 an army of workmen and sculptors, withdrawn for the time being from Versailles, were sent to Trianon, and the works were pushed vigorously, for Louis was anxious to have his new palace completed. He came himself on the 13th of November, with Madame de Maintenon, to inspect the structure, which he found much advanced and very beautiful. On the 5th of December he returned, and spent several hours there, and was well pleased with all he saw. On another occasion he was not well pleased, and, according to Saint-Simon, his dissatisfaction with a certain window in the rising walls of Trianon set in motion forces that affected politics:

"The king, who liked building, and who had cast off all his mistresses, had pulled down the little porcelain Trianon he had made for Madame de Montespan, and was rebuilding it in the form it still retains. One day he perceived, for his glance was most searching, that one window was a trifle narrower than the others. He showed it to Louvois, who was then Minister of War and also Superintendent of Buildings, in order that it might be altered, which, as it was not then finished, was easy to do. Louvois maintained that the window was correct. The king insisted then, and on the morrow also, but Louvois, obstinate and inflated with his authority, would not yield.

"The next day the king saw Le Nôtre in the gallery at

Versailles. Although his trade was gardens rather than houses, the king did not fail to consult him upon the latter. He asked him if he had been to Trianon. Le Nôtre replied that he had not. The king ordered him to go. On the morrow he saw Le Nôtre again; same question, same answer. The king comprehended the reason of this, and, a little annoyed, commanded him to be there that afternoon at a given hour. This time Le Nôtre did not dare to disobey. The king arrived, and Louvois being present, they returned to the subject of the window, which Louvois obstinately said was as broad as the rest. The king wished Le Nôtre to measure it, for he knew that, upright and true, he would say openly what he found. Louvois, piqued, grew angry. The king, who was not less so, allowed him to say his say. Le Nôtre, meanwhile, did not stir. At last the king made him go, Louvois still grumbling and maintaining his assertion with audacity and little measure. Le Nôtre measured the window, and said that the king was right by several inches. Louvois still wished to argue, but the king cut him short, and commanded him to see that the window was altered at once, and, contrary to his usual moderation, blamed him very severely. What annoyed Louvois most was the fact that this scene took place not only before all the officers of the Buildings, but also in the presence of all who followed the king in his promenades, nobles, courtiers, officers of the guards, and others, even all the valets. The dressing given Louvois was severe and long, mixed with reflections upon the fault of this window, which, had it not been noticed in time, might have spoiled all the façade and compelled it to be rebuilt.

"Louvois, who was not accustomed to be treated thus, returned home in fury and like a man in despair. His friends were frightened, and in their disquietude angled to learn what had happened. At last he told them, said he was lost,

Trianon, from the Courtyard

and that for a few inches the king forgot all his services, which had led to so many conquests. He declared that henceforth he would leave the trowel to the king, bring about a war, and so arrange matters that the king should have good need of him! He soon kept his word. He caused a war to grow out of the affair of the double election of Cologne, of the Prince of Bavaria, and of the Cardinal of Furstemberg. He confirmed it in carrying the flames into the Palatinate." [1] Such is the famous story concerning the window of Trianon.

In November, 1688, Trianon was finished and magnificently furnished, but the beds were not put in place until 1691; after that date the king could sleep at Trianon whenever he chose. All the furniture was covered with crimson damask bordered with gold. In the center of the château an open vestibule,[2] ornamented with beautiful marble columns, separated the main courtyard from the gardens, and connected the two principal parts of the palace. In summer this vestibule was sometimes used by Louis XIV as a dining-room. To the left of the vestibule, on the side facing the garden, were the apartments of Monseigneur, and also the salon of the Chapel, which contained an altar, and the salon of the Nobles. The apartments of Monseigneur, the three rooms furthest from the vestibule, consisted of the salon of Mirrors, the decorations of which cost 10,500 livres, and the bedchamber and antechamber of Monseigneur. Behind the five apartments just mentioned was the court of the Offices, which was surrounded by buildings in which the officers of the Household were lodged. To the right of the vestibule, in the wing on the north side of the main courtyard, were the king's apartments, the first of which, the salon of Columns, adjoined the vestibule, and opened on the east side into the king's antechamber, and on the north into the apart-

[1] Saint-Simon, II, pp. 83–85.

[2] The arches of the vestibule are closed now by windows between the columns.

ments of the north wing. Behind the royal antechamber was the king's bedchamber, and behind that three small cabinets and a large cabinet, called the cabinet of the Council; the windows of the latter are those seen on the right as one approaches Trianon from Versailles. The windows of the king's bedchamber looked out on one side on the courtyard, and on the other on the small ornamental garden called the *Jardin du Roi.* The north wing contained ten handsome apartments, five facing the *Jardin du Roi* and five looking on the large parterre behind the palace. Those facing the *Jardin du Roi* were occupied by Madame de Maintenon, but to-day they retain no traces of that fact, for they are filled with furniture of the First Empire, the souvenirs of their most famous royal and imperial occupant, Napoleon I. Under the Grand Monarch the gallery leading from the north wing to Trianon-sous-Bois was decorated with paintings [1] by Cotelle, Allegrain, and Martin, representing views of the château and gardens of Versailles. As for Trianon-sous-Bois, so called because the grove which adjoined it was a small ornamental wood, it contained a number of little apartments which served as lodgings for the king's brother, M. le Duc d'Orléans, and his wife, and for the king's grandsons and granddaughters-in-law, the Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne and the Duc and Duchesse de Berry. On the 22d of January, 1688, the king dined for the first time in his new château, in company with Monseigneur and Madame de Maintenon.

The gardens of Trianon contained, and still contain, bosquets and fountains, though much has been changed since the time of Louis XIV. From the terrace two splendid stone staircases descend to the grand canal. In both terrace and gardens there were jets of water as at Versailles. Mansart had designed the gardens of Trianon, and flowers abounded

[1] Many of these paintings are now in the Château of Versailles.

The Salon des Glaces, Trianon

there, all the flowers of France, and rare plants from Switzerland, from Constantinople, and from Persia. "One summer," says Saint-Simon, "the king took to going very often in the evening to Trianon, and gave permission once for all to all the court, men and women, to follow him. There was a grand collation for the princesses, his daughters, who took their friends there, and indeed all the women went to it if they pleased. . . . Nothing was ever more magnificent than these *soirées* of Trianon. All the flowers of the parterres were renewed every day; and I have seen the king and all the court obliged to go away because of the tuberoses, the odor of which perfumed the air, but so powerfully on account of their quantity that nobody could remain in the garden, although very vast, and stretching like a terrace all along the canal." [1]

There were from time to time splendid fêtes at Trianon, but Dangeau has left one picture of the royal family at Trianon, in the summer of 1699, with which it may be well to close the chapter. Under date of July 10, 1699, he writes: "At six o'clock in the evening the king went to walk in the gardens of Trianon, and after promenading for some time he stopped on the terrace, that looks toward the canal, and watched Monseigneur, Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, and all the princesses, embark. Monseigneur was in a gondola with Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne and Mme. la Princesse de Conti. Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne was in another with the ladies she had named; in others were Mme. la Duchesse de Chartres and Mme. la Duchesse.[2] All the king's musicians were on board a yacht. The king ordered chairs to be brought to the balustrade, and remained there until eight o'clock, listening to the music. When the king returned to the château, those on the gondolas crossed the canal and did

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 253.
[2] Daughters of Louis XIV and Madame de Montespan.

not return to the château until the hour for supper. The king at first had wished to embark, but as he had some tendency to rheumatism, M. Fagon advised him not to do so, although the weather was very fine. After supper Monseigneur and Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne walked in the gardens until midnight. Monseigneur then went to bed, but Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne and Mme. la Duchesse, entering gondolas with some of their ladies, remained on the canal until break of day. Mme. la Duchesse then went to bed, but Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne waited for Madame de Maintenon to set out for St. Cyr; she saw her enter her carriage at seven o'clock, and then went to bed, without appearing to be fatigued after having been up all night. Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne, who had returned to Versailles, walked in the gardens there until morning, and then went to play at mall at six o'clock."

Thus we see how the royal family enjoyed Trianon in a simple fashion during the soft nights of summer. In the closing years of his life Louis XIV preferred Marly to all his palaces. He seldom slept at Trianon, coming there simply to promenade. On the 11th of August, 1715, he walked in the gardens for the last time.

Since 1766 the Trianon of Louis XIV has been called the Grand Trianon to distinguish it from the Little Trianon, erected by Louis XV.

The Parterre du Midi

VII

THE PARKS

THE Small Park of Versailles, beyond the gardens, still exists, with its walls pierced by sixteen gates. It extends over about six thousand acres, and contains the Swiss Lake to the south of the château, and the wood of Satory, the grand canal, the Menagerie, the palace and gardens of Trianon, and the wood of Cerf-Volant. It abounds in fine roads and splendid trees, and under Louis XIV it was well stocked with small game for the shooting parties of the king.

The Large Park was begun in 1668, at which time they commenced to make roads and plant trees. In 1677 the king bought several tracts of land to complete his park, and ordered the whole to be surrounded by walls. The walls were completed, and the gates placed, in 1685. There were twenty-five gates, many of which still exist, and at each was a pavilion which served as a lodging for the Swiss soldier who guarded it. The Large Park covered more than 24,000 acres, and contained fifteen villages, many farms, and many hunting-pavilions. On the 22d of August the king visited various parts of his new park, and found the walls well advanced. This park contained a breeding-place for pheasants that in itself covered as much ground as the gardens of Versailles. The Large Park abounded in game of all kinds. They chased the stag there, and the rabbit. The number of pheasants was prodigious. "Never have I seen,"

says Dangeau, under date of November 18, 1707, "so many pheasants in the air. The king shot a large number, and gave them to the ladies who accompanied the Duchesse de Bourgogne." At Marly the wall of the Large Park of Versailles separated that park from the park of Marly, for Marly had a game-stocked park of its own. In his parks, as elsewhere, the king loved to make changes and embellishments. On the 8th of December, 1685, he shut himself up with M. de la Rochefoucauld, the grand huntsman, in order to consider the plan of the Large Park of Versailles,[1] and to see if anything further was needed to make it more attractive and convenient for hunting than it was already. Since he had at command such a hunting-establishment, such parks, such quantities of game, such a hunting-train, so varied, so complete, so magnificently appointed, it is not surprising that the Grand Monarch loved the chase.

[1] In the Revolution the Large Park of Versailles was cut up and sold.

VIII

THE COST OF VERSAILLES

IT is not easy to know exactly the cost of the Versailles of Louis XIV. However, by means of the *Comptes des Bâtiments* and other official documents, it is possible to arrive at a result so careful and exact that for all intents and purposes it may be considered final. M. Eckard, in his *Supplément aux Recherches Historiques sur Versailles,* has reached such a result. The sum total is 116,438,892 livres in the money of the time of Louis XIV. To find present values the livre must be multiplied by five, which would make the sum total to-day about 500,000,000 francs, or $100,000,000. Eckard divides the sum total as follows:

Expenses prior to 1664.....	1,500,000	livres
Expenses from 1664 to 1690.....	87,537,989	"
Expenses of the chapel (1699–1710)....	3,260,342	"
Expenses of Marly (1679–90).....	4,501,279	"
Sums paid for furniture, paintings, stuffs of gold and silver, and products of goldsmiths and silversmiths, etc.....	19,639,282	"
	116,438,892	livres

In that important memorandum concerning the expenses of Versailles which was made for Mansart by an officer in his administration named Marinier, there are some interesting details as to the expenditures from 1664 to 1690, which,

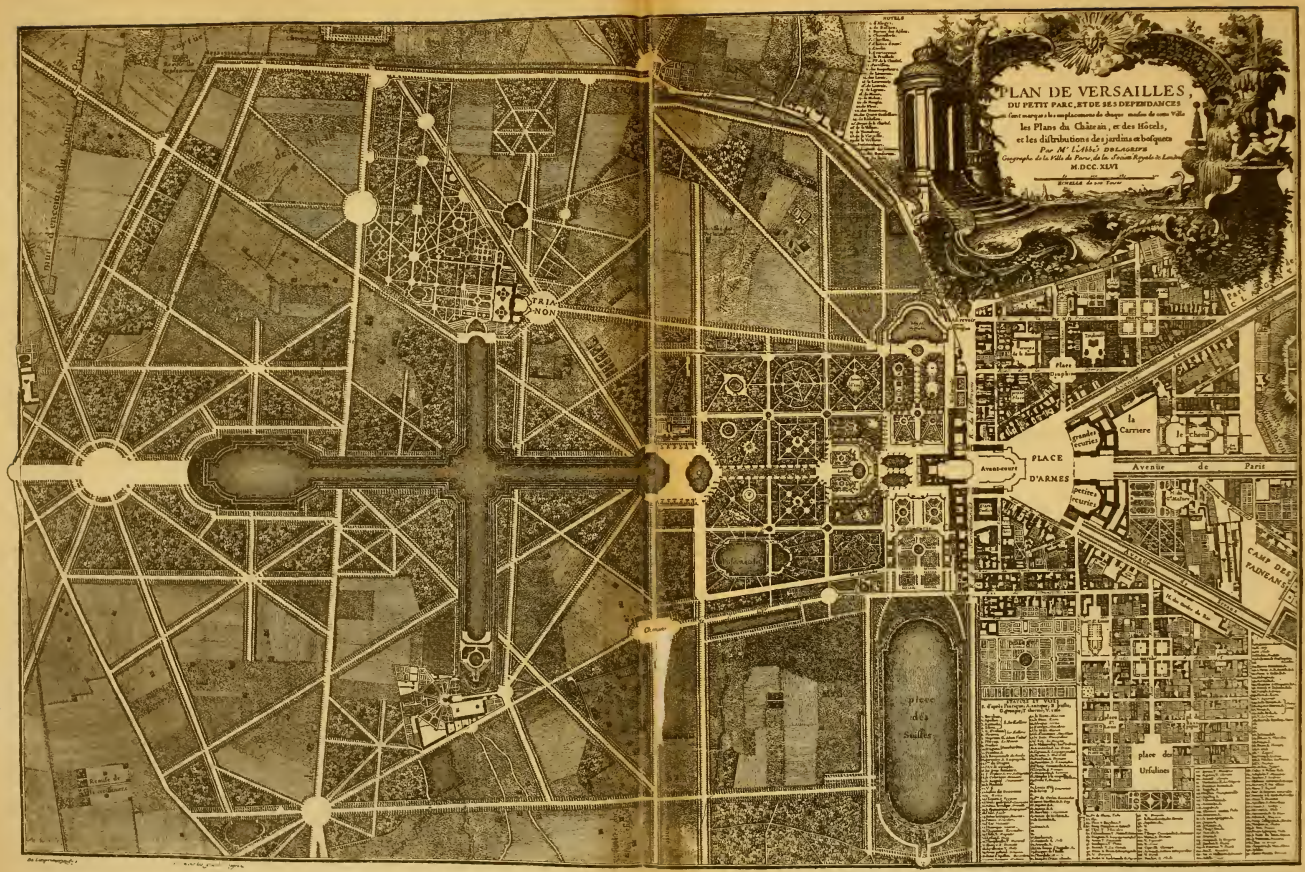
in the account above, are given in the lump sum of 87,537,-989 livres. These details are as follows:

For the purchase of lands.....	5,912,104	livres
For buildings and works in the park....	48,446,768	"
For mirrors and crystals.....	221,631	"
For sculptures	2,696,070	"
For paintings and antiques	509,073	"
For stuffs of gold and silver.....	1,075,673	"
For products of the goldsmiths' art, etc...	3,245,759	"
For medals and objects of art.....	556,069	"

It is necessary to notice that in the sum total given by Eckard the expenses of Marly, and of Clagny, the splendid château built by the king for Madame de Montespan, are included. Marly is placed at 4,501,279 livres, and we know that Clagny cost 2,074,592 livres. It seems proper to deduct these sums from the sum total of Versailles. As for the machine of Marly (costing 3,674,864 livres), and the immense works undertaken to bring the river Eure to Versailles (costing 8,612,995 livres), though neither were at Versailles, the expense was incurred to secure water for the gardens, and may therefore be rightly counted in the cost of the latter.[1]

To-day the state spends from 600,000 to 650,000 francs each year to keep up the palace and park of Versailles.

[1] Both these items are included in the sum total given by Eckard.



Plan of the Palace, Park, and Town of Versailles in the time of Louis XIV and Louis XV

IX

THE MEANING OF VERSAILLES

WHAT, then, was Versailles? Was it simply a huge palace, surrounded on one side by splendid gardens, and on the other by a stately town? It was that and more.

Colbert had tried to keep the king in Paris at the Louvre. But Louis could not be the king he wished to be at the Louvre. He had dreamed a dream, he had formed a policy, and to realize them both he needed Versailles. To-day the doctrine of the divine right of kings is an anachronism, but in Louis's time it was a living force in the world. At the death of Mazarin, on the 9th of March, 1661, Louis had addressed his ministers and secretaries as follows: "In future, gentlemen, I shall be my own prime minister." The court heard these words with astonishment; but France, weary of civil strife and political dissensions, distrusting her nobility and loyal to her sovereign, France heard Louis's words, and applauded them, and cried with joy, "A king!" Richelieu and Mazarin had paved a wide way for the royal chariot, and when, in 1661, Louis took the reins in his own hands, what stood between him and absolutism? Nothing but the fragments of power possessed by the nobility. Richelieu, it is true, had broken their haughty front, and the Fronde had revealed their weakness to the world; but they were still at the parting of the ways. They might seek to recover their lost strength, or the king, if he took the in-

itiative, might mold them to his will. Louis comprehended this, and, with that perception and perseverance which distinguished him, he advanced, amid the applause of France, to crush the nobles. To bring the higher nobility completely within his grasp, two things were essential: first, that they should all reside at court and form the king's permanent retinue, and, second, that they should serve regularly in the royal army, a thing quite contrary to their habits and pretensions. To carry out the first part of Louis's plan, Versailles, or its equivalent, was an absolute necessity. The Louvre, in the center of Paris, was out of the question.

Thus the Château of Versailles, with its vast salons, with its countless lodgings for courtiers, with its numerous dependencies, rose, and spread itself in the sunshine. With it rose the town of Versailles and the hôtels of the nobility. In the Rue des Réservoirs were the hôtels de Richelieu, de Créqui, de Condé, du Lude, and de Soissons; in the Rue de la Pompe, the hôtels de Noailles, de Toulouse, de Livry, du Plessis, and de Duras; in the Avenue de St. Cloud, the hôtels de Gesvres, de Guise, d'Estrées, and de Saint-Simon. These are but three streets out of many. The days of castle-life and cabals in the provinces were over. The local domination of the great lords was done. Their resources were swallowed up by the increasing luxury of the court, and each year they became more and more dependent on the royal bounty. From the windows of his magnificent Galerie des Glaces, the Grand Monarch saw a horizon that was his own work; but within that gallery of Versailles he saw daily, what was vastly more important, the French nobility at his feet. "He looked to right and to left," says Saint-Simon, "not only upon rising and upon going to bed, but at his meals, in passing through his apartments, or his gardens of Versailles, where alone the courtiers were allowed to follow him. He saw and noticed everybody; not one escaped him,

The Parterre du Nord

not even those who hoped to remain unnoticed. He marked well all absentees from court, found out the reason of their absence, and never lost an opportunity of acting toward them as the occasion might seem to justify. With some of the courtiers, the most distinguished, it was a demerit not to make the court their ordinary abode; with others it was a fault to come but rarely; for those who never or scarcely ever came it was certain disgrace. When their names were mentioned in any way, 'I do not know them,' the king would reply haughtily. Those who presented themselves but seldom were thus characterized: 'They are people I never see.' These decrees were irrevocable." [1]

Versailles, therefore, was a policy and a system of government. Versailles was more than a palace: it was a world.

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 364.

X

THE FÊTES OF VERSAILLES

THE grand fêtes of Versailles took place between 1663 and 1674, before Versailles became the seat of government, while both Versailles and the court, in fact, were in transition. During the period mentioned some seven or eight fêtes, each lasting several days, were given in succeeding years, but only three will be described here.

THE FÊTE OF 1664

On the 5th of May, 1664, the court, numbering six hundred persons, arrived at Versailles to remain until the 14th. Louis was to give a fête, ostensibly in honor of his mother, Anne of Austria, and of his wife, Marie Thérèse, but in reality in honor of Mlle. de la Vallière. In 1662 he had held in her honor his carrousel in the courtyard of the Tuileries; he was to offer her now one of the finest fêtes he ever gave. Its organization was under the charge of the Duc de Saint-Aignan, first gentleman of the Chamber. Lulli had composed the music, Molière and his troupe were to play the comedies, Vigarani had arranged the decorations, illuminations, and fireworks. The fête lasted three days, the 7th, 8th, and 9th of May, and its subject, taken from Cantos VI and VII of *Roland Furieux,* represented Roger in the island and palace of the enchantress Alcina. The rôle of Roger was

played by the King of France; the other rôles, by the chief nobles of the court.

On the first day they held, in a circus of verdure placed at the entrance to the Royal Allée, and covering a large part of what is now the parterre of Latona, a running at the ring. The fête opened with a flourish of trumpets, and the appearance of the Paladins, who entered the circus by four large arches of verdure: the King of France as Roger, the Duc de Noailles, the Duc de Guise, the Duc de Foix, the Comte d'Armagnac, the Marquis de Soyecourt, and others, as the Paladins of Charlemagne, all clad in brilliant habits, glittering with precious stones, and magnificently mounted. The cavalcade passed round the circle before the two queens and the ladies of the court. The Paladins were followed by a huge car, twenty-four feet long, fifteen feet wide, and eighteen feet high, carved and gilded and painted in striking colors, the chariot of Apollo, on which Apollo sat enthroned, having at his feet the four Ages. The Age of Gold was represented by Madame Molière, the Age of Silver by Hubert, the Age of Bronze by Mlle. de Brie, the Age of Iron by Du Croisy, all having their proper attributes. Millet, the king's coachman, dressed as Time, drove the car, which was drawn by four horses, and escorted by the twelve Hours, the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and a crowd of pages. When the grand march was concluded, the running at the ring began. The Marquis de la Vallière won the prize, a sword of gold enriched with diamonds, and received it from the hands of Anne of Austria. Night came, and the circus of verdure was lighted by four thousand torches. Lulli appeared with his musicians, and the Hours and the signs of the Zodiac, who danced in a charming ballet. The hour for supper arrived, and the four Seasons, followed by an army of attendants, entered to announce it. First rode Spring, Mlle. du Parc, in a habit of green, embroidered with silver and trimmed with natural

flowers; she was mounted on a Spanish horse. Summer followed, the Sieur du Parc, upon an elephant, splendidly caparisoned. Autumn, the Sieur de la Thorillière, rode upon a camel; Winter, the Sieur Béjard, upon a bear. Their attendants carried baskets of fruits and flowers. Diana appeared, and Pan, no other than Molière himself, each in turn addressing a compliment in verse to the Queen of France. A retinue of pages bore the collation to the tables of the royal family and of the courtiers. At the center of the largest table, crescent-shaped and crowded, sat the queen-mother, with the king at her right hand, and the queen at her left. Under a clear sky and quiet stars the torches in the circus of verdure flashed afar, lighting the faces of thousands of good Parisians, on the terrace of Versailles, who had come to catch a glimpse of their magnificent monarch, and stood staring at a wilderness of splendor.

On the second day the amusement was comedy. A theater had been erected in a salle of verdure in the park, and hung with tapestries which prevented the breeze from reaching the flames of the torches and candles. The troupe of Molière played the *Princesse d'Elide,* Molière himself taking the rôle of Moron. The actors were in fancy costumes, and the actresses were attended by pages, who carried their long trains. At the conclusion of the comedy there were songs and dances.

For the third day another theater had been constructed, this time at the end of the Royal Allée, including the basin of Apollo. Behind the basin a palace of Alcina had been constructed as a background: the basin formed the enchanted lake. The king and the two queens sat on a dais facing the basin, with the lords and ladies of the court at either side. The spectacle began with a concert, conducted by Lulli, and rendered by the king's musicians. Alcina then appeared in her barge on the enchanted lake, and addressed the two

By permission of Braun, Clement & Co.

Louise Françoise de la Baume-le-Blanc, Duchesse de la Vallière

queens in verse. When she waved her wand her enchanted palace, thanks to the skill of Vigarani, stood glittering in lines of light. Alcina's subjects, demons, dwarfs, and giants, danced a brilliant ballet, after which Roger (who on this occasion was not the king) appeared with other knights, and prepared to storm the castle. Alcina rallied her subjects, but since Roger had the ring which destroyed enchantments, the palace vanished in a whirlwind of fire. This display of fireworks, planned by Vigarani, was the conclusion of the fête.

On the following day, the 10th, there was another running at the ring, this time in the moats surrounding the château,[1] and the court watched it from the balconies. His Majesty won the prize, but left it to be gained by others. Finally the Duc de Coislin won it, and received the diamond from the queen's hand. In the afternoon of the 11th, Louis took the court to promenade in the Menagerie, and in the evening Molière and his troupe played *Les Fâcheux* in one of the salons of the palace. On the 12th there was a lottery with splendid presents for the ladies, and in the evening Molière gave for the first time his immortal *Tartuffe*. On the 13th he played the *Mariage Forcé,* and on the 14th the court set out for Fontainebleau. This fête of 1664 is made memorable, not by its pomp and prodigious splendor, but by the fact that during its progress Molière played *Tartuffe*.

THE FÊTE OF 1668

After the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, Louis decided to give a grand fête in his gardens of Versailles. Poor La Vallière, though still at court, was loved no longer. Madame de Montespan had captured the king's heart, and the fête of 1668 was given in her honor. The Duc de Créqui, first gentleman of

[1] The château of Louis XIII. The new château had not been built.

the Chamber, and the Maréchal de Bellefonds, first *maître d'hôtel,* had charge of its organization. Three thousand persons were invited. The court arrived at Versailles from St. Germain on the 21st of April.

On the evening of the 22d a collation was served in the bosquet of the Star, which had been splendidly decorated for the occasion. Then the court went to the theater, constructed by Vigarani on the site of the present basin of Saturn. Before the opera the king's pages offered to the ladies oranges and fruits of all kinds. They played the *Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus,* an opera by Quinault, with music by Lulli, and after it *George Dandin,* a new piece by Molière. At the conclusion of the performance the court walked through the gardens to a salon of verdure.[1] Here the tables and buffets were arranged for the supper, and loaded with flowers and fruits in massive baskets of silver. The *Gazette* gives a long description of this salon of verdure, in which the silver products of the Gobelins abounded. The dark foliage of the bosquet was illuminated by hundreds of torches, and the tables were lighted by thousands of candles in candelabra of carved silver.

After the supper came the dance, which was held in another bosquet in a ball-room[2] constructed by Levau. It was open to the sky, lined with orange-trees in silver tubs and sparkling fountains, and filled with lights. At two o'clock in the morning the dances ended, and the courtiers left the ball-room to see the illuminations in the park. The façade of the château, the terrace, and the parterre of Latona were all ablaze with colored lights, while the Royal Allée was lined with seventy-two towers of colored fire, which shot up thousands of rockets into the sky. To finish the spectacle a superb display of fireworks, planned by Fivry, was discharged

[1] On the site of the present basin of Flora.
[2] Where the basin of Ceres now is.

from the side of the Swiss Lake. The fête cost 117,000 livres, a sum equal to nearly $120,000 to-day. It was costly, but it lacked the glamour of romance, the allegory and the chivalry, which had embellished the fête in honor of La Vallière, the one woman who loved Louis for himself alone. It was pompous, full of gold and silver, not romantic, but magnificent like Montespan.

THE FÊTE OF 1674

"The king," says Félibien, "after the conquest of Franche-Comté, in order to give the court some moments of repose and pleasure, following the fatigues of a long journey which the weather had rendered very disagreeable, ordered, as soon as he arrived at Versailles on the 30th of June, that fêtes should be prepared. One of the most remarkable things about the king's fêtes is the promptness that accompanies their magnificence; because his orders are executed with such diligence by those who have charge of the arrangements that things are accomplished as by a miracle. People are surprised to see, almost in a moment, theaters erected, bosquets adorned with fountains and statues, and collations served; especially since everything has been done so rapidly and so quietly that they have been hardly able to perceive the preparations."[1]

The fête took place on six days during the months of July and August. On the first day, the 4th of July, there was a collation, served in the *Marais,* now the Baths of Apollo, which was decorated with a very large number of beautiful porcelain vases filled with flowers. The fruits were served in baskets of porcelain. The courtiers then passed to the court of marble, on the other side of the château, where *Alceste,* an opera by Quinault and Lulli, was to be performed

[1] Dussieux, I, pp. 70–71.

by the actors of the Royal Academy of Music. The theater was the marble court itself. All the windows of the château were illuminated, and the sides of the courtyard were decorated with lofty candelabra of silver and crystal, and with orange-trees in silver tubs. His Majesty's chair was placed on a low platform, covered with velvet, in the royal court; behind it were the raised seats for the courtiers.

On the second day of the fête, July 11th, the king spent the evening in his little porcelain house of Trianon, where the main salon was decorated with a prodigious quantity of flowers. Quinault's *Églogue de Versailles* was sung, and the court then returned in carriages to Versailles for supper, which was served in one of the bosquets of the garden. On the 17th the members of the French Academy came to compliment His Majesty on his recent conquests, and in the name of his colleagues the Abbé Fléchier made an eloquent speech, with which, according to the *Gazette,* His Majesty was "extremely satisfied."

July 19th was the third day of the fête. In the afternoon the king gave a collation to the ladies at the Menagerie, after which the court embarked in gondolas, and remained for some time on the canal, listening to music. In the evening the theater was placed in the Grotto of Thetis, where the whole court witnessed a performance of Molière's *Malade Imaginaire.*

For the fourth day, July 28th, the king ordered that the collation should be more splendid than those previously given. It was served in the Théâtre d'Eau, and in the wealth of its lights, its silver and gold vessels, its flowers and decorations, it surpassed the other collations of the fête. An open-air theater had been erected near the basin of the Dragon, in which Quinault's *Cadmus et Hermione* was played. The evening closed with a display of fireworks on the grand canal, and a magnificent supper, served in the marble courtyard.

Anne of Austria

The fifth day, August 18th, was the most worthy of notice. On that day M. de Gourville, in the name of the Prince de Condé, presented to Louis one hundred and seven flags taken from the enemy at the battle of Seneffe. At the conclusion of this imposing ceremony the courtiers entered thirty six-horse carriages and drove in the park. The usual collation followed, and then the play, this time in a theater constructed in the Orangery, where Racine's tragedy *Iphigénie* was admirably performed and much applauded. A display of fireworks at the grand canal terminated the evening.

The sixth and last day, August 31st, witnessed no change in the daily life of the court, but in the evening the illumination of the gardens of Versailles was magical. The lines of all the parterres blazed with light, the fountains were aglow with colored fires, while the grand canal was illuminated throughout its whole extent. The king went to walk in the gardens at one o'clock in the morning and remained for some hours. The court promenaded until dawn.

Thus closed the grand fêtes of Versailles. France and Europe had seen nothing like them since the Renaissance. They made Versailles a fairy-land; and to-day some traces of their vanished magnificence still linger in the pictures of Silvestre and Lepautre. Among them all the Fête of 1674 was truly royal, since the Grand Monarch enhanced its pomp and splendor with the masterpieces of Racine and Molière, with martial music and the battle-flags of the enemy.

XI

MARLY

NO description of the court of Louis XIV can be complete without an account of Marly. Marly was too closely identified with the king and the courtiers to be omitted, and, moreover, it was unique in its conception and embellishment. Saint-Simon was as unjust to Marly as to Versailles. "The king," says he, "tired of cost and bustle, persuaded himself that he should like something little and solitary. He searched all around Versailles for some place to satisfy this new taste. He examined several neighborhoods; he traversed the hills near St. Germain, and the vast plain which is at the bottom, where the Seine winds and bathes the feet of so many towns, and so many treasures in quitting Paris. He was pressed to fix himself at Lucienne, where Cavoye afterward had a house, the view from which is enchanting; but he replied that so fine a situation would ruin him, and that as he wished to go to no expense, he also desired a situation which would not urge him into any. He found behind Lucienne a deep, narrow valley, completely shut in, inaccessible from its swamps, and with a wretched village called Marly upon the slope of one of its hills. . . . The king was overjoyed at his discovery. The hermitage was made. At first it was only for sleeping in three nights, from Wednesday to Saturday, two or three times a year, with a dozen at the outside of courtiers, to fill the most indispensable posts. But by degrees the her-

mitage was augmented, the hills were pared and cut down, to give at least the semblance of a prospect; in fine, what with buildings, gardens, waters, aqueducts, the curious and well-known machine, statues, precious furniture, the park, the ornamental inclosed forest, Marly has become what it is to-day, though it has been stripped since the death of the king. Great trees were unceasingly brought from Compiègne or farther, three fourths of which died and were immediately after replaced; vast spaces covered with thick wood, or obscure alleys, were suddenly changed into immense pieces of water, on which people were rowed in gondolas; then they were changed back again into forest (I speak of what I have seen in six weeks); basins were changed a hundred times; cascades the same; carp-ponds adorned with the most exquisite painting, scarcely finished, were changed and differently arranged by the same hands, and this an infinite number of times; then there was that prodigious machine just alluded to, with its immense aqueducts, the conduit, its monstrous resources devoted solely to Marly, and no longer to Versailles; so that I am under the mark in saying that Versailles, even, did not cost so much as Marly."[1] This last statement is absurd. Saint-Simon was talking at random, without any knowledge of the accounts. As has already been shown in the chapter on the cost of Versailles, Eckard places the expenses of Marly from 1679 to 1690 at 4,501,279 livres. The expenses from 1690 to 1715 will amount to as much more; and thus, including the cost of the machine of Marly, the sum total for the park and palace is slightly over 12,000,000 livres, or about $12,000,000 to-day, a little over one tenth of the cost of Versailles. The king built and changed continually at Marly. Let us see what he obtained for his outlay.

In 1676 the king bought land at Marly; the place was cov-

[1] Saint-Simon, II, pp. 370–371.

ered with thick woods, which in 1677 a very large number of peasants, working under the *corvée,* that is, without wages, were forced to cut. In 1679 the king began to build Marly. Mansart commenced the construction of the château in that year and finished it in 1684. "Tired of cost and bustle," says Saint-Simon, "the king persuaded himself that he should like something little and solitary." We are to infer that after the completion of Versailles the king wearied of it and turned to Marly; but a glance at the dates shows conclusively that the king began Marly long before Versailles was finished. Marly and Versailles, in fact, grew in size and splendor at the same time, and slowly, for the king worked at their enlargement and embellishment through a period of forty years. The Duc de Saint-Simon was invited to Marly for the first time on November 30, 1695, and he does not seem to have taken the trouble to make himself acquainted with the history of the place prior to that date.

The Château of Marly, called frequently the Pavilion of the Sun, stood on high ground in the center of the park. The château was square, and was surrounded by an extensive terrace, from which the splendid gardens sloped gradually to the distant woods. The four façades were richly decorated with sculptures and mural paintings, executed, after designs by Lebrun, by Rousseau and Meusnier. In the center of the interior was a vast octagonal salon, superbly decorated, occupying the entire height of the building, with four doors and four beautiful marble chimneypieces, and with an interior balcony on a level with the rooms on the first floor. On the ground floor and on the first floor were four suites of apartments, intended solely for the royal family, and all opening into the large salon. Those of the king were furnished in red velvet; Monseigneur's were in green velvet; Monsieur's in blue velvet; and those of his wife, Mme. la Duchesse d'Orléans, were in yellow velvet. The king's bed

was hung with red draperies and adorned with white plumes. In his cabinet stood a large gilded cupboard, set with glass and richly carved, which contained jewelry of gold and silver, and other articles of value. These the king presented to the ladies from time to time at lotteries, the tickets for which cost them nothing. The contents of the cupboard was renewed at each visit of the court. The vestibules of the château were hung with paintings [1] by Van der Meulen and Martin, representing the various towns taken by the king's armies. The château, as has been said, was for the royal family only, though Madame de Maintenon, of course, had apartments there after 1684. It was necessary, therefore, to have other lodgings for courtiers.

These were supplied in part by twelve pavilions, each square in form, and though much smaller and less richly decorated than the château, still very handsome. They were placed in two lines, six on a side, and were connected with one another by ornamental arbors of foliage. The grand basins and allées of the garden separated the two lines of pavilions. All the pavilions were adorned with mural paintings emblematical of the twelve signs of the Zodiac, after which they were named; the two nearest the château being reserved for the princes of the blood. In addition to the pavilions there stood at the left of the château, at one side of the gate of the avenue that led to the road to Versailles, a chapel, and at the other side of the gate a pavilion called the Perspective, which concealed a long suite of offices, lodging-rooms, kitchens, and dining-rooms intended for people belonging to the service. Such, in brief, was the king's country house. Words convey no impression of the effect of the sculptures, the delicate yellow of the stone, the gorgeous mural paintings on the walls, amid the green foliage of the

[1] These paintings are to-day at the Louvre and at the Château of Versailles.

trees and arbors, amid the marble statues and the splashing fountains. In the water-colors preserved at the Cabinet des Estampes, and reproduced in M. Guillaumot's sumptuous book on Marly, the favorite château of the Grand Monarch lives again with all its brilliancy and splendor.

But the gardens [1] were the chief charm of Marly. "I do not believe," wrote the Palatine in 1702, "that it would be possible to find in all the world a more beautiful garden than this." On the upper terrace, to the right and left of the château, were four ornamental bosquets, called the Salles-Vertes, which contained the carp-basins and very beautiful statuary. The château itself, slightly elevated, was surrounded by a balustrade, from which eight flights of steps, one in the center of each side and one at each corner, descended to the terrace; the balustrade being ornamented with marble sphinxes, with bronze Cupids astride, like those at the entrance to the parterre du Midi at Versailles. In front of the château a broad flight of steps led from the upper terrace to a second terrace, called the Grand Parterre, which was flanked by two Salles-Vertes containing basins; from this in turn steps descended to the third terrace, containing a piece of water styled the Quatre-Gerbes, to the right and left of which steps led to the lower part of the gardens, which contained three pieces of water of varying size and shape, placed one behind another, and separated by trees and ornamental allées. These basins were called the Grand-Jet, the Nappes, and the Abreuvoir; the latter was just outside the wall of the gardens, and to-day, in ruins, is the sole remnant of Marly. The Grand-Jet threw up five columns of water to a surprising height. At the basin of the Nappes they placed in 1702 the horses of Coyzevox, which are now at the entrance to the garden of the Tuileries; and in the reign of Louis XV the beautiful horses of Coustou, which stand now at the entrance to the

[1] The gardens of Marly were designed by Duruzé.

Champs-Élysées, were placed on the wall of the garden, behind the Abreuvoir. The parts of the garden just mentioned lay in front of the château, and between the twelve pavilions of the Zodiac.

Behind the château was the finest fountain at Marly, the Cascade. "It was," says Piganiol, "a veritable river, rushing down over sixty-three steps of white marble, and forming sheets of water of unsurpassed beauty." In 1728 this admirable Cascade was destroyed by order of Cardinal Fleury, who was unwilling to spend the money needed for its repair. The half-moon at the head of the Cascade, next to the terrace of the château, contained splendid bronze groups of the Ocean and of Neptune, by Coustou and by Coyzevox. Beyond the Cascade rose the wooded slopes of the valley, the high gardens, as they were called, containing charming walks, and twelve or fifteen bosquets, adorned with fountains and statues. The gardens of Marly covered nearly 300 acres. Terraces, allées, basins, fountains, bosquets, cabinets of verdure, the château itself, the pavilions, all were adorned with an immense number of statues [1] in marble or bronze, which had been created by an army of sculptors. Yew-trees abounded, and were trimmed in various forms.

The park of Marly contained 1850 acres, and the forest 3000 acres. Through the latter the king had made so many splendid roads that, according to Dangeau, it was the finest place in the world to hunt the stag. They played mall in the park. Monseigneur and the Duchesse de Bourgogne played frequently, and the king summoned professional players to Marly to amuse his brother, Monsieur. There was a see-saw for the young princesses, and a sledge on rails, a sort of merry-go-round. But whatever diversions were

[1] Some ten or twelve of these statues are in the garden of the Tuileries, and as many at the Louvre. The rest were destroyed during the Revolution.

provided for the younger members of the royal family, the one who amused himself most in the park of Marly was the king, who was constantly planting new trees, and having them trimmed in different styles, or trimming them himself. Early in 1689 Marly appeared to be finished, but in August of that year the king began to plant new allées. On the 16th of September Dangeau tells us that the king was busy planting trees and placing statues. On the 1st of October His Majesty amused himself in trimming yew-trees. In January, 1690, he laid out a new parterre. In 1695 we find him watching the construction of the Cascade; in 1696 he ordered a new fountain, the Baths of Agrippina; in 1699 a regiment of soldiers worked at Marly, cutting away the hill beyond the Abreuvoir. The king remarked to Dangeau in 1701 that Marly was then so beautiful that he thought nothing more could be done to improve it. Four days later not a single workman remained in the gardens of Marly; but six months afterward Dangeau noted the fact that the works had been begun again, and that they were well advanced. In 1698 Madame de Maintenon ventured to make some remarks to the Grand Monarch on the increasing expenses of Marly, but her observations were not well received. The king, indeed, continued, almost up to the day of his death, to embellish Marly.

COURT LIFE AT MARLY

At first the journeys to Marly took place but twice a month, the sojourn being for three days at a time, but in the later years of the reign the journeys were much more frequent, and the king sometimes remained two or three months at Marly. Music, comedies, lotteries, promenades, hunts, suppers, balls, and gambling were, as at Versailles, the ordinary pleasures of the court, but with fewer people and less etiquette. Racine, in a letter to Boileau, under date of August

24, 1687, has summed up in a few sentences the contrast between Marly and Versailles. "You know," he writes, "how delightful Marly is. The court here wears a different aspect from that which it has at Versailles. There are fewer people, and the king invites all who are here.[1] Therefore all those who find themselves here feel highly honored and are in the best possible humor. The king himself is very free and amiable. One would say that at Versailles he was entirely occupied with business, but that at Marly he was a host seeking the pleasure of his guests." Aside from the delight he took in adorning his hermitage, and the relaxation he had there, Marly was extremely useful to the king. "The frequent fêtes," says Saint-Simon, "the private promenades at Versailles, the journeys to Marly, were means on which the king seized in order to distinguish or mortify the courtiers, and thus render them more assiduous in pleasing him. He felt that of real favors he had not enough to bestow; and in order to keep up the spirit of devotion, he unceasingly invented all sorts of ideal ones, little preferences and petty distinctions, which answered his purpose as well."[2] To be at Versailles was the duty of all the nobility; to be at Marly was the privilege of the favored few. If Versailles was necessary in order to make the nobles dependent on the royal bounty, Marly was not less necessary, in order that assiduity and adulation might be kept at white heat.

They had, then, fewer people and less etiquette at Marly. "Marly," says Saint-Simon, "had a privilege unknown to the other places. On going out from the château, the king said aloud, 'Your hats, gentlemen,' and immediately courtiers, officers of the guard, everybody in fact, covered their heads, as he would have been much displeased had they not done so; and this lasted all the promenade, that is, two or three

[1] All the expenses of the sojourns at Marly were paid for by the king.
[2] Saint-Simon, II, p, 364.

hours in summer, or in other seasons, when he dined early at Versailles to go and walk at Marly, and not sleep there." [1] The Palatine was indignant at the freedom given the courtiers at Marly. "One does not know what to make of all this," she writes. "When the king goes to the promenade, all the courtiers put on their hats. The Duchesse de Bourgogne goes to walk; well, she takes the arm of one of her ladies, and the others walk at her side. Here in the salon all the men are seated in the presence of Monseigneur and of Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne; some even recline on the couches. I cannot accustom myself to this confusion. It is not at all my idea of what a court should be." Few passages on the etiquette of the court are more instructive than this. How slight was the relaxation from the rigid etiquette of Versailles! And yet Mme. la Duchesse d'Orléans, who was neither a fool nor a prig, considered it "confusion."

The first fêtes at Marly were given on the 23d of July and on the 3d of September, 1684. At the fête of the 21st of August, 1685, they played before supper the *Sicilien* of Molière, and after supper there was a ball. During the sojourn of the court in September, 1686, Madame de Montespan, furious at her downfall, and yet unwilling to vanish from the scene, remarked bitterly to the king after dinner that she had a favor to ask of him during the stay at Marly—namely, that he would permit her to entertain the people of the second carriage, and to divert the antechamber. In 1687 the sojourns of the court were longer and more frequent, and gambling began for high stakes. In September, 1689, there was a lottery, at which the ladies, with tickets which cost them nothing, gained articles of jewelry adorned with pearls and diamonds, brocades, and silverware. At all court lotteries, unless given for some special purpose, the objects won were presents from the king. After the lottery the

[1] Saint-Simon, III, p. 25.

Anne Marie de la Trémoille, Princesse des Ursins

comedy-ballet of the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* was played in the salon; the king was seated in the balcony. The winter of 1700 was especially gay at Marly. There were more balls and masquerades than usual, and also small dances, which the king was fond of having at Marly, and at which he took pleasure in seeing his daughters, Madame de Chartres and Mme. la Duchesse, and his granddaughter-in-law, the Duchesse de Bourgogne, dance. In the same year music became the fashion, and the king's musicians were summoned to give concerts in the apartments of Madame de Maintenon.

It was at Marly, at a ball on the 23d of January, 1705, that the Princesse des Ursins, who had been exiled to Rome in the previous year by Louis XIV, reappeared in triumph, and took, according to Saint-Simon, such a "high flight" that its like had never been seen before. It is interesting to see what this "high flight" was. Saint-Simon's portrait of the Princesse des Ursins is to the life: "She was rather tall than otherwise, a brunette, with blue eyes of the most varied expression, in figure perfect, with a most exquisite bosom. Her face, without being beautiful, was charming; and she was extremely noble in air, very majestic in demeanor, full of graces so natural and so continual in everything that I have never seen any one approach her, either in form or mind. Her wit was copious and of all kinds; she was flattering, caressing, insinuating, moderate, wishing to please for the sake of pleasing, with charms irresistible when she strove to persuade and win over; accompanying all this, she had a grandeur that encouraged instead of frightening; a delicious conversation, inexhaustible and very amusing, for she had seen many countries and persons; a voice and way of speaking extremely agreeable, and full of sweetness. She had read much and reflected much. She knew how to choose the best society, how to receive them, and could even have held a court; was polite, distinguished, and,

above all, was careful never to take a step in advance without dignity and discretion. She was eminently fitted for intrigue, in which, from taste, she had passed her time at Rome; with much ambition, but of that vast kind, far above her sex, and the common run of men—a desire to occupy a great position and to govern. A love for gallantry and personal vanity were her foibles, and these clung to her until her latest day; consequently she dressed in a way that no longer became her, and as she advanced in life, removed further from propriety in this particular. She was an ardent and excellent friend, of a friendship that time and absence never enfeebled, and, consequently, an implacable enemy, pursuing her hatred to the infernal regions. While caring little for the means by which she gained her ends, she tried as much as possible to reach them by honest means. Secret, not only for herself but for her friends, she was yet of a decorous gaiety, and so governed her humors that at all times and in everything she was mistress of herself. Such was the Princesse des Ursins. From the first moment on which she entered the service of the Queen of Spain, it became her desire to govern not only the queen, but the king,[1] and by this means the realm itself. Such a grand project had need of support from our king, who, at the commencement, ruled the court of Spain as much as his own court, with entire influence over all matters." [2]

This remarkable woman offended Louis XIV by her course in Spain. He exiled her to Rome, but she asked for permission to come to Versailles and justify herself, and, through the influence of Madame de Maintenon, the request was granted. She came and took the king by storm. "We returned to Marly," says Saint-Simon. "It need not be doubted that Madame des Ursins was among the invited.

[1] Philippe V, grandson of Louis XIV.

[2] Saint-Simon, I, pp. 262–264.

Apartments were given her, and nothing could equal the triumphant air with which she took possession of them, the continual attentions of the king to her, as though she were some little foreign queen just arrived at his court, or the majestic fashion in which she received these attentions, mingled with grace and respectful politeness, then almost out of date, which recalled the stately old dames of the queen-mother. She never came without the king, who appeared to be completely occupied with her, talking with her, pointing out objects for her inspection, seeking her opinion and her approbation with an air of gallantry, even of flattery, which never ceased. The frequent private conversations that she had with him in the apartment of Madame de Maintenon, and which lasted an hour, and sometimes double that time, and those that she had very often in the morning alone with Madame de Maintenon, rendered her the divinity of the court. The princesses encircled her the moment she appeared anywhere, and went to see her in her chamber. Nothing was more surprising than the servile eagerness with which the greatest people, the highest in power and the most in favor, clustered around her. Her very glances were counted, and her words, addressed even to ladies of the highest rank, imprinted upon them a look of ravishment. . . . At the ball Madame des Ursins seated herself near the grand chamberlain, and looked at everybody with her lorgnette. At every moment the king turned round to speak to her and to Madame de Maintenon, who came for half an hour or so, and on her account displaced the grand chamberlain, who put himself behind her. In this manner she joined Madame des Ursins, and was close to the king, the conversation between the three being continual. But what, more than any public distinction, marked the prodigious flight that Madame des Ursins took was the fact that in the salon she carried a little spaniel in her arms, as though she had been in her own house.

People could not sufficiently express their astonishment at a familiarity on which even Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne would not have dared to venture; still less could they do so when they saw the king caress this little dog at the close of the ball. In fine, such a high flight has never been seen. People could not accustom themselves to it, and those who knew the king and his court are surprised still, when they think of it, after so many years." [1]

Anecdotes of the life at Marly might be multiplied, but it is necessary to pass on. For the Grand Monarch there were dark days at Marly. At Marly he received the news of the death of his brother, at Marly he received accounts of the defeats of his generals, to Marly he came in the night of the 14th of April, 1711, when his son and heir lay dead at Meudon. Saint-Simon sketches in a few words that coming in the night: "At Marly everybody had felt so confident that the king's return there was not dreamt of. Nothing was ready, no keys of the rooms, no fires, scarcely an end of candle. The king was more than an hour thus with Madame de Maintenon and other ladies in one of the antechambers. The king retired into a corner, seated between Madame de Maintenon and two other ladies, and wept at long intervals. At last the chamber of Madame de Maintenon was ready. The king entered, remained there an hour, and then went to bed at nearly four o'clock in the morning." [2]

To finish with the life at Marly, let us add that, with but two exceptions, no ambassador, no foreigner, was ever admitted to Marly; that husbands had the right to accompany their wives there; and that the king worked there each morning with his ministers, as at Versailles.

THE DESTRUCTION OF MARLY

"On Saturday, the 10th of August, 1715, the king walked before dinner in his gardens at Marly. He returned to Ver-

[1] Saint-Simon, I, pp. 277–279. [2] Idem, II, p. 188.

sailles about six o'clock in the evening, and never saw again that favorite work of his hands." [1] Louis XIV was hardly dead when the regent, acting on the advice of the Duc de Noailles, prepared to destroy Marly. With great good sense the Duc de Saint-Simon prevented this disgraceful project. Let him tell the story in his own words:

"One afternoon, as we were about to take our places at the regency council, the Maréchal de Villars drew me aside and asked me if I knew that Marly was going to be destroyed. I replied, 'No'; indeed, I had not heard of it, and I added that I could not believe it. 'You do not approve of it?' said the maréchal. I assured him I was far from doing so. He replied that the destruction was resolved on, that he knew it beyond all doubt, and that if I wished to hinder it, I had not a moment to lose. I replied that when we took our places I would speak to M. le Duc d'Orléans. 'Immemediately,' replied the maréchal, quickly; 'speak to him this instant, for the order is perhaps already given.' As all the council were already seated, I went behind to M. le Duc d'Orléans, and whispered in his ear what I had just learned without naming from whom, and begged him, if my information was right, to suspend the execution of his project until I had spoken to him, adding that I would join him at the Palais Royal after the council. He stammered a little, as if sorry at being discovered, but nevertheless agreed to wait for me. I said so in leaving to the Maréchal de Villars, and went to the Palais Royal, where M. le Duc d'Orléans admitted the truth of the news I had heard. I said I would not ask who had given such pernicious counsel. He tried to show it was good by pointing to the saving in keeping up that would be obtained; to the gain that would accrue from the sale of so many water-conduits and materials; to the unpleasant situation of a place to which the king [2] would not be able to go for several years; and to the expense the king was put

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 344. [2] The young Louis XV.

to in keeping up so many other beautiful palaces, not one of which admitted of pulling down. I replied to him that these were the reasons of the guardian of a private gentleman, the conduct of whom could in no way resemble that of the guardian of a King of France; that the expenses incurred in keeping up Marly were necessary, and that, compared with the total of those of the king, they were but as drops in the ocean. I begged him to get rid of the idea that the sale of the materials would yield any profit; all the receipts would go in gifts and pillage, I said; and also that it was not these petty objects he ought to regard, but that he should consider how many millions had been buried in this valley to transform it into a fairy palace, unique as to form in all Europe, unique, too, by the beauty of its fountains, and by the reputation that the deceased king had given to it; that it was an object of curiosity to strangers of every rank who came to France; that its destruction would resound throughout Europe with censure; that these mean reasons of petty economy would not prevent all France from being indignant at seeing so distinguished an ornament swept away; that although neither he nor I might be very delicate upon what had been the taste and the favorite work of the late king, the regent ought to avoid wounding his memory, which, by such a long reign, so many brilliant years, so many great reverses so heroically sustained, and escaped from in so unhoped-for a manner, had left the entire world in veneration of his person: in fine, that he might reckon all the discontented, all the neutral even, would join in chorus with the Ancient Court, and cry murder; that the Duc du Maine,[1] Madame de Ventadour,[2] the Maréchal de Villeroi[3] would not hesitate to look upon the destruction of Marly as a crime against the king, a crime they would not fail to make the best

[1] Son of Louis XIV and Madame de Montespan.

[2] Governess of Louis XV.

[3] Governor of Louis XV.

of for their own purposes during all the regency, and even after it was at an end. I clearly saw that M. le Duc d'Orléans had not in the least reflected upon all this. He agreed that I was right; promised that Marly should not be touched, that it should continue to be kept up, and thanked me for preserving him from this fault. When I was well assured of him, 'Admit,' said I, 'that the late king, in the other world, would be much astonished if he could know that the Duc de Noailles had made you order the destruction of Marly, and that it was I who hindered it.' 'Oh, as to that,' he replied quickly, 'it is true he could not believe it.' In effect Marly was preserved and kept up, and it is the Cardinal Fleury, with his collegiate proctor's avarice, who has stripped it of its river,[1] which was its most superb charm." [2]

The Duc de Saint-Simon rendered a real service to art and to France that day.

With the history of Marly during the reigns of Louis XV and Louis XVI, we have nothing to do. Marly fell at the Revolution, but not in the manner commonly supposed. In October, 1793, the gardens were devastated, and the furniture was sold at auction. Many statues were broken. A carpenter named Huzard constructed two cases in which he preserved the beautiful horses of Coustou, which were brought to Paris in 1794. In 1796 the Minister of Finance sent to the Palais Bourbon a certain number of the statues of Marly which had escaped the iconoclasts of 1793. In March, 1799, the state offered for sale the palace and park of Marly, stripped of all precious objects and partly destroyed. A purchaser was found, named Sagniel, who bought the domain for 412,361 francs, paying a certain sum down, and agreeing to pay the balance in instalments. In the château Sagniel set up a spinning-mill for wool stuffs and a cloth-manufactory, but the business did not prosper, and to

[1] The Cascade. [2] Saint-Simon, III, pp. 78–80.

secure funds for the manufactory and for the payments due the state, he began to demolish the twelve pavilions of Marly. From the sale of the marbles and other materials he gained large sums, which he sank in his business, and he was compelled to borrow money. In 1806 he still owed the state 50,000 francs. Then he offered to sell the château to M. Daru, an officer of the Household of the Emperor Napoleon, threatening at the same time to demolish it unless he received his price. Daru refused to buy, and the inhabitants of Marly, fearing that Sagniel would carry out his threat, addressed a petition to the emperor, asking him to prevent the final destruction of the château. On the 14th of June, 1806, Napoleon sent Fouché with an order to stop the destruction of Marly, but in the meanwhile Sagniel had paid his 50,000 francs to the state, and could therefore do as he pleased with his own. The emperor then offered to purchase the château, but Sagniel at once demanded so high a price that the emperor abandoned the matter. Sagniel continued his destruction, and laid Marly low. When he had ruined all, and sold all, and swept away completely one of the most splendid examples of the French art of the seventeenth century, he sold the land in 1810 to a certain M. Andryane for 288,000 francs, by whom it was sold in 1811 to Napoleon I for 400,000 francs. To-day Marly is a farm of the state, and is rented at 2500 francs a year.

Nothing remains of the Marly of the Sun King save the ruined basin of the Abreuvoir. Into it the teamsters drive their tired horses to water; behind it stands a stone wall, beyond which once lay the gardens of the Grand Monarch,—with their broad terraces and their marble statues, with their flashing fountains and their glittering pavilions,—where now rise the woods, dark and cool and silent, growing as they grew of old in those distant days before Louis XIV brought to the quiet valley his architects, his artists, and his millions.

III

THE KING

I

THE SERVICE OF THE KING

ELEVEN grand services were attached to the king's person: (1) the religious service, directed by the grand almoner; (2) the *Maison du Roi,*[1] directed by the grand master of the Household, together with the first *maître d'hôtel;* (3) the Chamber, Antechamber, and Cabinet, under the orders of the grand chamberlain; (4) the Wardrobe, directed by the grand master of the Wardrobe; (5) the Stables,[2] governed by the grand equerry and the first equerry; (6) the Hunting-Train and Kennels,[2] directed by the grand huntsman; (7) the Buildings, under the control of the superintendent of Buildings; (8) the Journeys, directed by the grand marshal of lodgings;[3] (9) the King's Guard,[4] under the orders of the officers of the *Maison Militaire;* (10) the Police, directed by the grand provost of France; (11) the Ceremonies, directed by the grand master of ceremonies, a post demanding, on the part of the person who filled it, great tact and a thorough knowledge of rank and etiquette.

Let us consider now the organization of the services of

[1] All that pertains to the *Maison du Roi* has been given in the chapter on the Grand Commun.

[2] The organization of the Stables and Hunting-Train will be found in the chapters devoted to those subjects.

[3] It was the business of the grand marshal of lodgings to assign apartments to the courtiers who followed the king to Marly, to Fontainebleau, etc., or to the army.

[4] The King's Guard has been described in the chapter on the Courtyards.

the Chamber, Antechamber, and Cabinet, of the Wardrobe, and of the Chapel.

THE CHAMBER AND ANTECHAMBER

The service of the Chamber was directed by the grand chamberlain, whose post was worth 800,000 livres; he had, however, but 3600 livres of wages, and the rest of the revenue came from profits and various rights. The same was true of all the chief posts at court; the salaries were small and the perquisites enormous. The grand chamberlain had under his orders 4 first gentlemen of the Chamber, 24 gentlemen of the Chamber, and 24 pages of the Chamber, the latter being employed in the king's service with the pages of the Stables. There were also 4 first *valets de chambre,* 32 *valets de chambre,* 16 ushers, 12 cloak-bearers, 2 gun-bearers, 8 barbers, 3 watchmakers, 1 dentist, 6 *garçons,* 2 chair-bearers, 10 furniture-men.

"The king treated his valets well," says Saint-Simon, "above all those of the Household. It was among them that he felt most at ease, and that he unbosomed himself the most familiarly, especially to the chiefs. Their friendship and their aversion have often had grand results. They were unceasingly in a position to render good and bad offices; thus they recalled those powerful enfranchised slaves of the Roman emperors, to whom the senate and the great people paid court and basely truckled. These valets during Louis XIV's reign were not less courted. The ministers, even the most powerful, openly studied their caprices, and the princes of the blood, not to mention people of lower grade, did the same. The majority were accordingly insolent enough, and if you could not avoid their insolence, you were forced to put up with it." [1]

The three first *valets de chambre* who had gained the king's

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 368.

The Château from the Royal Courtyard

confidence most fully were Blouin, Niert, and, above all, Bontemps, governor of Versailles. The latter was an excellent servant, and stood so well with the king that he was one of the witnesses at the marriage of the Grand Monarch and Madame de Maintenon.

There was likewise the music of the Chamber, controlled by two superintendents, and consisting of composers, singers, musicians, 24 violins, 12 trumpeters, 4 drummers, 4 fife-players, etc. To the service of the Chamber belonged also the king's medical attendants, a first doctor, a doctor in ordinary, 8 doctors serving by the quarter, a first surgeon, a surgeon in ordinary, 8 surgeons serving by the quarter, and the physicians in the infirmary of the *Maison du Roi.* The king's first doctor during the last twenty years of his life was M. Fagon, who owed his appointment to the influence of Madame de Maintenon. "Daquin, first doctor of the king and creature of Madame de Montespan, had lost nothing of his credit by her removal, but had never been able to get on well with Madame de Maintenon, who looked coldly upon all the friends of her predecessor. Daquin had a son, an abbé, and wearied the king with solicitations on his behalf. Madame de Maintenon seized the opportunity, when the king was more than usually angry with Daquin, to obtain his dismissal; it came upon him like a thunderbolt. On the previous evening the king had spoken to him for a long time as usual, and had never treated him better. All the court was astonished also. Fagon, a very skilful and learned man, was appointed in his place at the instance of Madame de Maintenon." [1]

In the *État de la France* (1712) mention is made, in connection with the service of the Chamber, of the valets whose business it was to take care of the pointers and the setters, and the birds, which the king kept in his smaller cabinets.

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 34.

The dogs were allowed 1446 livres a year for their support, a sum which included the wages of their valets, and the royal pastry-cook sent them seven biscuits each day. The service of the Antechamber required only two ushers.

THE CABINET

The personnel of the Cabinet consisted of 2 ushers, 4 secretaries, 3 interpreters of foreign languages, 2 readers, one of whom was Racine, a historiographer, and many couriers. To this service were attached also the persons in charge of the king's collections of medals and jewels, and the custodians of the crown furniture.

One of the most useful men in the service of the Cabinet was the king's private secretary, of whom Saint-Simon has left the following portrait: "Rose, secretary in the king's cabinet, died, aged about eighty-six, at the commencement of the year 1701. For nearly fifty years he had held the office of the 'pen,' as it is called. To have the 'pen' is to be a public forger, and to do what would cost anybody else his life. This office consists in imitating the handwriting of the king so exactly that the real cannot be distinguished from the counterfeit. In this manner are written all the letters that the king ought or wishes to write with his own hand, but which, nevertheless, he will not take the trouble to write. Sovereigns and people of high rank, even generals and others of importance, employ a secretary of this kind. It is not possible to make a great king speak with more dignity than did Rose; nor with more fitness to each person, and upon every subject. The king signed all the letters that Rose wrote, and the characters were so alike that it was impossible to find the smallest difference. Many important things had passed through the hands of Rose. He was extremely faithful and secret, and the king put entire trust in him.

"Rose was a little man, neither fat nor lean, with a toler-

ably handsome face, keen expression, piercing eyes sparkling with cleverness; a little cloak, a satin skullcap over his gray hairs, a smooth collar, almost like an abbé's, and his pocket-handkerchief always between his coat and his vest. He used to say it was nearer his nose there. He laughed very freely at the foreign princes, and always called the dukes with whom he was familiar, 'Your Ducal Highness,' in ridicule of the sham Highnesses. He was extremely neat and brisk, and full of sense to the last; he was a sort of personage." [1]

THE WARDROBE

The service of the Wardrobe was directed by a grand master, who had under his orders 2 masters of the Wardrobe, 4 first valets, 16 valets, 4 *garçons ordinaires*, a cravat-starcher whose business it was to place, each morning, the diamonds and ruffles on the wrist-bands of His Majesty's shirts, 26 tailors, bootmakers, jewelers, embroiderers, etc., and 2 laundrymen. As has been said, in connection with the château, the rooms of the Wardrobe faced the marble court on the south side, below the Hall of the King's Guards.

THE RELIGIOUS SERVICE

The service of the chapel was directed by the grand almoner of France, under whom served a first almoner, a master of the Oratory, the king's confessor, 8 almoners serving by the quarter, a chaplain in ordinary, 8 chaplains serving by the quarter, who were to say a low mass each day before the king, 8 clerks of the chapel, 2 porters of the chapel, and a sacristan. The music was conducted by a master of the chapel music, having under his orders 4 masters of music serving by the quarter, 4 organists serving also by the quarter, 4 pages, 90 choristers, and 19 musicians.

" The music of the chapel," says Saint-Simon, " was much

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 204.

superior to that of the opera, and to all the music of Europe, and at Christmas it surpassed itself. There was nothing so magnificent as the decoration of the chapel, or the manner in which it was lighted. It was full of people; the arches of the tribune were crowded with the court ladies. There was nothing so surprising as the beauty of the spectacle. The ears were charmed also." [1]

Of the eleven grand services affecting the king's person the essential facts as to personnel and organization have now been given, here or elsewhere, except in the cases of the following four: the Buildings, the Journeys, the Police, the Ceremonies. A chapter will be devoted to the Ceremonies further on, and the Police can be briefly disposed of by saying that it was the duty of the grand provost to assume certain responsibilities for the guarding of the park and palace which did not fall to the Swiss Guards.

The superintendent of Buildings had under his charge much more than the royal palaces, but it is only with the latter that we have to do. The king had long since ceased to reside at the Louvre or the Tuileries. Meudon had been given to Monseigneur, and St. Cloud to Monsieur. Choisy, which became later a royal palace, was then the property of the Grande Mademoiselle, and St. Germain had been turned over temporarily to the King and Queen of England. Louis XIV, therefore, during the last thirty years of his life, lived first of all at Versailles, the seat of government, then at Marly, his favorite hermitage, at Trianon, at Fontainebleau, and at Compiègne. Whatever works were undertaken at these various palaces, it was within the province of the superintendent of Buildings to supervise them and hasten their execution, and as His Majesty was continually constructing and demolishing on a large scale, the post was no sinecure.

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 337.

By permission of Braun, Clement & Co.

Louis XIII crowned by Victory

As for the Journeys, those to Compiègne and Fontainebleau took place at fixed times in each year: Compiègne, in the spring; Fontainebleau, in the autumn, and the stay of the court at the latter residence lasted usually six weeks. Owing to the number of the courtiers and the immense retinue in attendance, these removals from one château to another were very costly. A trip to Fontainebleau sometimes cost more than 400,000 livres. When the king's civil household (between 3000 and 4000 persons), the households of the royal family and of the princes of the blood, the world of courtiers, the train of lackeys and valets, the army of cooks and candlemakers, cobblers, tailors, and dealers of every description, were on the march, some 15,000 or 20,000 people in all, the cortège of the Grand Monarch advanced like an Oriental court; "one had to take the post in advance to go anywhere."

The journeys to Marly were much more frequent, twice a month at first, and for three days at a time, from Wednesday to Saturday, for the king returned to spend Sunday at Versailles, which was his parish. Later on the king went to Marly once a week for two or three days, and sometimes remained there in the summer for several weeks. He paid all the expenses of the journeys to Marly, but the number of persons who were invited was very much smaller than on the journeys to Compiègne and Fontainebleau, where all the court, unless specially excluded, had the right to follow him.

II

HIS DAILY LIFE

THE Duc de Saint-Simon deserves great credit for having written in his *Memoirs* that often-quoted chapter on the daily life of the Grand Monarch. For him it was a laborious and thankless task. "But what determines me," he adds, "is that details wearying, nay annoying, to instructed readers, who have been witnesses of what I relate, soon escape the knowledge of posterity; and that experience shows us how much we regret that no one takes upon himself a labor, in his own time so ungrateful, but in future years so interesting, by which princes, who have made quite as much stir as the one in question, are characterized." [1] Valuable as Saint-Simon's chapter is, it will be necessary to supplement his details with others taken from the *État de la France* if one would see clearly those unrivaled masterpieces of etiquette, the *lever* and *coucher* of Louis XIV.

The chief divisions of the king's day were as follows: the *lever,* the morning, the council, the dinner, the afternoon, the supper, the evening, the *coucher.*

THE LEVER

Before His Majesty awoke, the princes of the blood, the chief nobles, the officers of the crown, and the officers of the

[1] Saint-Simon, III, p. 19.

Chamber assembled in the king's grand antechamber (now the *Œil-de-Bœuf*), to await the *lever*. In that sumptuous antechamber this throng of men, in stately periwigs and brilliant habits, glittering with jewels, moved quietly to and fro, conversing in low tones, gathering about those who seemed likely to have favors to bestow, smiling at some anecdote or scrap of scandal, saluting one another as gracefully as possible, watching one another out of the corners of their eyes, and glancing expectantly toward the white-and-gold doors beyond which was the founder and preserver of their fortunes, the fountainhead of riches and honors and all rank. Each one of them had had his own *lever*, attended by lesser lights, from which each had come to the *lever* of the king. It was necessary that they should be in the royal antechamber by eight o'clock.

"The king usually awoke at the time he had named the evening before at his *coucher,* but if he did not wake at the hour he had given, the first *valet de chambre* woke him. In the morning, the first *valet de chambre* on duty for the quarter, who slept in the chamber of His Majesty, rose ordinarily an hour before the king, went quietly out of the chamber of His Majesty, and dressed himself in one of the antechambers. About a quarter of an hour before the king was awakened, that is about a quarter to eight, the first *valet de chambre* returned quietly into the chamber of His Majesty with an officer or *garçon* of the Quartermaster's Department, who came to make a fire, if it was spring or fall, or to place more wood on the fire, if it was winter. At the same time the *garçons* of the Chamber quietly opened the blinds of the windows, and removed the night-lamp[1] and candle, which had burned all night. They removed also the collation for the night (consisting of bread, wine, and water, plates and

[1] The night-lamp consisted of a wick placed in a large piece of yellow wax.

napkins, a cup, and a cup for the trial), and took away the camp-bed of the first *valet de chambre.* This being done, all retired with the exception of the first *valet de chambre.* When the palace clock began to strike eight, he approached the king's bed,[1] and said to the monarch, ' Sire, it is the hour.' Then he went to open the door for the *garçons* of the Chamber, one of whom had gone a quarter of an hour before to summon the grand chamberlain and the first gentleman of the Chamber on duty, if they were not already in the antechamber, while another had gone to bid the Goblet and the Bouche bring the king's breakfast; a third took possession of the king's door to admit into the chamber only those persons who, from their rank or on account of the offices they held, were permitted to enter when the king was awake, but still in bed." [2] Both sides of the double door were opened only for Monseigneur and for the princes of the blood; for others but one was opened for each person admitted, and closed again immediately. People never knocked, but scratched lightly on the panel. The *entrées* which preceded the general entrance of the courtiers were four: (1) the *entrée familière,* for the princes; (2) the *grande entrée,* for the great officers of the crown; (3) the first *entrée,* for those who on account of their posts had the right of entrance; (4) the *entrée* of the Chamber, for the officers of the Chamber.

The *entrée familière* took place as soon as the king was awake, and the persons who entered were Mgr. le Grand Dauphin, his sons, the Duc de Bourgogne and the Duc de Berry, Monsieur, the king's brother, the Duc du Maine and the Comte de Toulouse, sons of the king and Madame de

[1] The canopy of the king's bed was not arranged as it is at present (*à la duchesse*), but extended over the whole bed, and was supported by four posts covered with hangings of red velvet embroidered in gold, with curtains at each corner. Until the king woke, the curtains were closed. At the four corners of the canopy were white plumes.

[2] État de la France (1712).

The Bedchamber of Louis XIV

Montespan, and M. le Duc, grandson of the Grand Condé. It was their time to speak to the king, and if any one of them had anything to ask of him, the rest stood aside.

The *grandes entrées* followed almost immediately, that is, by a quarter past eight, and the persons admitted were the grand chamberlain, the first gentleman of the Chamber, the grand master of the Wardrobe, the masters of the Wardrobe, the first valet and other officers of the Wardrobe, who carried the king's clothing, the first doctor, the first surgeon, and, as long as she lived, the nurse who had cared for the king in his infancy. "The latter kissed the king; the doctor and the surgeon rubbed him and often changed his shirt, because he was in the habit of sweating a great deal."[1] From time to time the king granted the *grandes entrées* to certain persons as a special favor, as to M. de Lauzun, to the Maréchal de Boufflers, etc., and the noblemen thus distinguished entered with the grand chamberlain and the others.

"While the king was still in bed, the first *valet de chambre,* holding in his right hand a flagon of spirits of wine, poured it upon His Majesty's hands, under which he held with his left hand a basin of silver-gilt. The grand chamberlain, or the first gentleman of the Chamber, presented the vase of holy water to His Majesty, who took it, making the sign of the cross. If the princes or nobles present had anything to say to the king, they could speak to him at this time."[2] Usually some one desired to speak to the sovereign for a moment, but if not, the grand chamberlain presented a prayer-book to the king, and the princes and nobles passed into the king's cabinet. After a short religious service, during which the king repeated several prayers, and which did not last more than a quarter of an hour, His Majesty ordered the princes and nobles to be summoned from the cabinet, and they reëntered the bedchamber.

[1] Saint-Simon, III, p. 21. [2] État de la France (1712).

"Before the king rose, the Sieur Quentin, his barber, who had charge of the wigs, came to present to His Majesty two wigs of different lengths, and the king chose the one which pleased him for the day. As soon as he had gotten out of bed, the king put on his slippers, which were presented by the first *valet de chambre.* The grand chamberlain, or the first gentleman of the Chamber, handed His Majesty his dressing-gown; but in their absence the first *valet de chambre* could present the dressing-gown also. Standing erect, the king again took the holy water, and then walked to his arm-chair, which was placed in the spot where His Majesty was accustomed to dress. When the king had passed outside the balustrade, a valet of the Wardrobe entered, and took from an arm-chair near the bed the king's knee-breeches and his sword." [1]

As soon as the king had seated himself in his arm-chair, the *petit lever* began. Saint-Simon cuts this short, as follows: "Every other day we saw him shave himself, and he had a little short wig in which he always appeared, even in bed, and on medicine days. He often spoke of the chase, and sometimes said a word to somebody. No toilet-table was near him; he had simply a mirror held before him." [2] This is a very meager account of the mechanism of the *petit lever;* and it is necessary to turn to the *État de la France* for details:

"Then the grand chamberlain, or the first gentleman of the Chamber, or, in their absence, the barber, removed the nightcap from the king's head and handed it to a valet of the Wardrobe. The king shaved himself; and the first *valet de chambre,* who had received a mirror from a *garçon* of the Chamber, held it before His Majesty. While he was shaving, the king asked for the first *entrée,* and the first gentleman of the Chamber repeated the words aloud to the *garçon* of the Chamber who was at the door.

[1] État de la France (1712). [2] Saint-Simon, III, p. 21.

"The first *entrée* began at that moment, that is to say, when the *garçon* of the Chamber allowed those persons to enter, as soon as they presented themselves, whose offices gave them that right, or who had received it, in some few instances by special privilege. These persons were the secretaries of the Cabinet, the first valets of the Wardrobe, the two readers of the Chamber, the doctor in ordinary, the surgeon in ordinary, the intendant of the crown furniture, certain old officers to whom the king had granted the right as though they still held their posts, etc. When the king was shaved, the Sieur Quentin presented to him the wig for his *lever*,[1] which was shorter than the one which His Majesty usually wore during the rest of the day. When he had put on his wig, and as the officers of the Wardrobe approached to dress him, the king asked for the *entrée* of the Chamber. The ushers of the Chamber entered and took their post at the king's door,[2] replacing the *garçon* of the Chamber. With them entered also the valets of the Chamber, the cloak-bearers, the gun-bearer, the other officers of the Chamber, and the ushers of the Cabinet." [3]

At this moment the *petit lever* ended, and the *grand lever* began. One of the ushers of the Chamber placed himself at the king's door, while the other approached the first gentleman of the Chamber and whispered in his ear the names of the people of quality who were in the grand antechamber (for example, the names of the cardinals, archbishops, ambassadors, dukes, peers, governors of provinces, presidents of parliaments, marshals of France, etc.), and the first gentle-

[1] This statement does not agree with that of Saint-Simon, namely, that the king wore his short wig in bed; but the État de la France is probably correct, for the reason that while Louis XIV lived Saint-Simon did not have the *grande entrée*. He only obtained it, as he himself says, in 1717 from the regent, and without the *grande entrée* he could not have seen the king in bed.

[2] The door leading from the royal bedchamber to the grand antechamber.

[3] État de la France (1712).

man of the Chamber repeated these names to the king. The king immediately ordered that these people should be admitted, or, without giving the order, said nothing to the contrary. The usher, after transmitting this order to his comrade at the door, took his place before the king, and stood ready to arrange the crowd. The *entrées* followed. "These *entrées*," says Saint-Simon, "called simply *entrées,* were purely personal; no appointment or charge gave them. They conferred the right to see the king at his rising, after the *grandes entrées,* and also to see him, but under difficulties, during all the day and evening." [1]

"The usher at the door allowed certain persons, for whom there was a general order, to enter as soon as he saw them, as the Duc de Vendôme, etc., and at the same time he permitted the officers of the *Maison du Roi* to enter without asking permission for them, because no permission was needed for those officials. Then he permitted the nobility to enter, but with some discretion, according to their rank, or the importance of the posts they held. It was the duty of the usher to ask the name and rank of all persons whom he did not know, and it was not proper for the person questioned to find fault with him, since it was his duty to know these facts about all who entered.

"Meanwhile the king was dressing, and commenced by putting on his stockings. A valet of the Wardrobe handed the under-stockings and garters to the first valet of the Wardrobe, by whom the stockings were presented to the king, and His Majesty drew them on himself. A valet of the Wardrobe presented the knee-breeches, which had silk stockings attached; and a *garçon* of the Wardrobe put on the king's shoes, which were ornamented with diamond buckles. Two pages of the Chamber took away the slippers, while the first valet of the Wardrobe presented the garters with their diamond buckles, which the king fastened himself." [2]

[1] Saint-Simon, III, p. 81. [2] État de la France (1712).

His Majesty then asked for his breakfast, which was brought by the officers of the Bouche and Goblet on a service of porcelain and gold; but whenever the king drank, the formalities of the trial (which have already been described in the chapter on the Grand Commun) had to be taken.

"After the breakfast, the king removed his dressing-gown, and the master of the Wardrobe drew off his night-dress, holding it by the right sleeve, while the first valet of the Wardrobe held it by the left; the night-dress was then handed to one of the officers of the Wardrobe. Before the removal of his night-dress, the king had taken from it the relics that he wore day and night, and had given them to the first *valet de chambre*. This valet carried them into the king's cabinet, placed them in a little sack on a table with the king's watch, and stood guard over the watch and relics until the king entered the cabinet.

"A valet of the Wardrobe, meanwhile, brought the king's shirt, which had been warmed if the weather was cold. If Mgr. le Dauphin was at the *lever* at that moment, the grand chamberlain, or the first gentleman of the Chamber, or the grand master of the Wardrobe, received the shirt from the valet of the Wardrobe, and presented it to the dauphin to give to the king; in the absence of the dauphin, one of these officers presented the shirt to the Duc de Bourgogne, or to the Duc de Berry, or to the Duc d'Orléans. For other princes of the blood the shirt was not passed to the grand chamberlain, or to the first gentleman of the Chamber, but was handed by the valet of the Wardrobe directly to the prince, who, before presenting it to the king, placed his hat, gloves, and cane in the hands of the valet. If no princes of the blood were present, the grand chamberlain, or the first gentleman of the Chamber, or the grand master of the Wardrobe handed the shirt to the king. While the king was removing his night-dress and putting on his shirt, two

valets of the Chamber stood beside his arm-chair, holding up his dressing-gown to conceal him from the crowd.

"The king then rose from his chair. The valets of the Wardrobe brought the sword, the vest, and the *cordon bleu.* The grand master of the Wardrobe fastened the sword at the king's side, put on the vest, and placed over it the blue ribbon, at the end of which were attached the cross of the Order of St. Esprit in diamonds and the cross of the Order of St. Louis, with its small red ribbon; both crosses hung beside the sword. A valet of the Wardrobe handed the king's coat to the grand master of the Wardrobe, and the latter assisted His Majesty in putting it on. If by chance, as sometimes happened when the king was with the army, none of the great officers of the crown were at the *lever,* then all the various articles of clothing were presented to the king by the valets of the Wardrobe. A number of cravats were then brought in a basket, and the king chose the one he wished. The master of the Wardrobe presented it to him, but the king fastened it himself. A valet of the Wardrobe brought three lace handkerchiefs on a tray of silver-gilt; the master of the Wardrobe presented the tray, and the king took one or more handkerchiefs, as he pleased. Whenever the king was in his dressing-gown, in bed, or indisposed, only the grand master of the Wardrobe could present the handkerchiefs; on other occasions the master of the Wardrobe presented them. The master of the Wardrobe also presented to the king his hat, gloves, and cane." [1]

While His Majesty was dressing, the nobility having the *entrées* were continually entering the bedchamber; the usher at the door was constantly coming and going to ask the first gentleman of the Chamber permission for one person or another, a permission which the first gentleman obtained from the king; and the usher of the Chamber was arranging

[1] État de la France (1712).

the crowd. Conversation among the nobility was carried on in very low tones, and if any one spoke too loud, the usher requested silence. The majority of persons having the *grandes entrées* had already passed into the king's cabinet, or otherwise the bedchamber, large as it was, could not have contained the crowd. The Grand Monarch dressed [1] surrounded by 150 or 200 people.

"As soon as he was dressed," says Saint-Simon, "he prayed to God at the side of his bed, where all the clergy present knelt, the cardinals without cushions, all the laity remaining standing; the captain of the guards came to the balustrade during the prayer." [2] The *Etat de la France* completes the details: "When he was dressed, the king passed immediately behind the balustrade, and knelt on two cushions which a valet of the Wardrobe had placed on the floor before an arm-chair near the bed. This valet stood inside the balustrade. The king took holy water and prayed to God, and, at the end, the grand almoner of France, or the first almoner, repeated in a low voice the prayer, *Quæsumus omnipotens Deus, ut famulus tuus Ludovicus rex noster,* etc. The king again took holy water, and went out." [3]

When the king, followed by the captain of the guards, passed from his bedchamber into his cabinet, the *lever* ended, and the morning began.

As a masterpiece of etiquette the *lever* of the Grand Monarch has never been equaled, nor can its like ever be seen again, for the circumstances out of which it grew and of which it was the logical result can never again exist. In the splendor of its appointments, in the number of persons in-

[1] While the king dressed, a *valet de chambre* held a mirror before him, and if he rose early, and the morning was dark, valets holding silver candlesticks with lighted candles stood at either side.

During the *grand lever* the clockmaker entered to wind and set the clocks in the chamber and cabinets, and His Majesty's watch, placed on a table in the cabinet in charge of the first *valet de chambre*.

[2] Saint-Simon, III, p. 21.

[3] État de la France (1712).

volved in its marvelous mechanism, and above all in the ease, the smoothness, the grace, the dignity, which a lifetime of training gave to each motion and act of *garçon,* valet, grand officer, peer, or prince, it was unique. The Grand Monarch himself performed his part with unparalleled majesty; and a man who rose and began his day under such auspices may be pardoned for considering himself apart from, and superior to, other men.

THE MORNING

"After the prayer, the king," says Saint-Simon, "passed into his cabinet. He found there or was followed by all who had the *entrée,* a very numerous company, for it included everybody in any office. He gave orders to each for the day; thus within half a quarter of an hour it was known what he meant to do, and then all this crowd left directly. The bastards, a few favorites, and the valets alone were left. It was then a good opportunity for talking with the king,—for example, about plans of gardens and buildings,—and the conversation lasted more or less according to the persons engaged in it. All the court, meanwhile, waited for the king in the gallery, the captain of the guards being alone in the chamber, seated at the door of the cabinet. During this pause the king gave audiences when he wished to accord any, spoke to any persons he might wish to speak to secretly, and gave secret interviews to foreign ministers in presence of Torcy. They were called 'secret' simply to distinguish them from the uncommon ones by the bedside.

"The king then went to mass, where his musicians always sang an anthem. He came and went by the door of the cabinets into the gallery; and while he was going to and returning from mass, everybody spoke to him who wished, after apprising the captain of the guards, if they were not

Louis XIV breakfasting with Molière

distinguished. He did not go below [1] except on grand fêtes or at ceremonies. . . . During all his life, the king failed only once in his attendance at mass; it was when he was with the army during a forced march. He missed no fast-day, unless really indisposed. Some days before Lent he declared publicly that he should be very much displeased if any one ate meat or gave it to others, under any pretext. He ordered the grand provost to look to this and report all cases of disobedience; but no one dared to disobey his commands, for they would soon have found out the cost. They extended even to Paris, where the lieutenant of police kept watch and reported. For twelve or fifteen years the king himself, however, had not observed Lent. At church he was very respectful. During his mass everybody was obliged to kneel at the *Sanctus,* and to remain so until after the communion of the priest, and if he heard the least noise, or saw anybody talking during the mass, he was much displeased. At the mass he said his chaplet (he knew no more), always kneeling, except at the Gospel. On Holy Thursday he served the poor at dinner. He took the communion five times a year, in the collar of the order,[2] band, and cloak." [3] The ceremony of the king's communion was as follows: "After the elevation of the mass, a folding-chair was pushed to the foot of the altar, and was covered with a piece of stuff, and then with a large cloth, which hung down before and behind. At the *Pater,* the chaplain rose and whispered in the king's ear the names of all the dukes who were in the chapel. The king named two, always the oldest, to each of whom the chaplain advanced and made a reverence. During the communion of

[1] That is to say, on the ground floor of the chapel. The king usually sat in his tribune.

[2] On such occasions the grand master of the Wardrobe placed the cloak on the king's shoulders, and presented the collar of the Order of St. Esprit, and the officers of the Wardrobe fastened it above the cloak.

[3] Saint-Simon, III, p. 27.

the priest the king rose and went and knelt down on the marble floor behind this folding-chair and took hold of the cloth; at the same time the two dukes, the elder on the right, the other on the left, each took hold of a corner of the cloth; the two chaplains took hold of the other two corners of the same cloth, on the side of the altar, all four kneeling, and the captain of the guards also kneeling, and behind the king. The communion received and the oblation taken some moments afterward, the king remained a little while in the same place, and then returned to his own, followed by the two dukes and the captain of the guards, who took theirs. If a son of France happened to be there alone, he alone held the right corner of the cloth, and nobody the other; and when M. le Duc d'Orléans was there, and no son of France was present, M. le Duc d'Orléans held the cloth in like manner. If a prince of the blood was present alone, however, he held the cloth, but a duke was called forward to assist him. He was not privileged to act without the duke." [1]

"During the mass the ministers assembled in the king's chamber, where distinguished people could go and speak or chat with them. Upon returning from mass, the king amused himself a little, and asked almost immediately for the council. Then the morning was finished." [2]

THE COUNCIL

"On Sunday, and often on Monday, there was a Council of State; on Tuesday, a Finance Council; on Wednesday, a Council of State; on Saturday, a Finance Council. Rarely were two held in one day, or any on Thursday or Friday. Once or twice a month there was a Council of Despatches on Monday morning; but the orders that the secretaries of state took every morning between the king's *lever* and his mass

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 2. [2] Idem, III, p. 22.

much abridged this kind of business. All the ministers were seated according to their rank, except at the Council of Despatches, where all stood, except the sons of France, the chancellor, and the Duc de Beauvilliers.

"Thursday morning was almost always blank. It was the day for audiences that the king wished to give, often unknown to any one, back-stair audiences. It was also the grand day taken advantage of by the bastards [1] and the valets, because the king had nothing to do. On Friday after the mass the king was with his confessor, and the length of their audience was limited by nothing, and might last until dinner. On the mornings, at Fontainebleau, when there was no council, the king usually went from mass to the apartments of Madame de Maintenon, and so at Trianon and Marly. It was the time of their tête-à-tête without interruption. Often on the days when there was no council the dinner-hour was advanced, more or less, for the chase or the promenade. The ordinary hour was one o'clock; but if the council still lasted, then dinner waited, and nothing was said to the king." [2]

THE DINNER

The ceremony with which the King's Meat was brought from the Grand Commun to the palace, and the various duties of the officers of the *Maison du Roi,* have already been described in the chapter on the Grand Commun. The etiquette attending the preparation of the king's table has been mentioned also. These arrangements were completed while the council was still in session. When the council broke up, the king passed from his cabinet into his bedchamber, where he dined in the presence of a crowd of nobles.

"The dinner being ready, the principal courtiers entered;

[1] The Duc du Maine and the Comte de Toulouse.
[2] Saint-Simon, III, p. 23.

then all who were known; and the first gentleman of the Chamber on duty informed the king. The dinner was always *au petit couvert,* that is, the king ate by himself in his chamber upon a square table in front of the middle window. It was more or less abundant, for he ordered in the morning whether it was to be a 'little' or a 'very little' service; but even at the latter there were always many dishes, and three courses without counting the fruit.

"I have seen, but very rarely, Monseigneur and his sons standing at their dinners, the king not offering them a seat. I have continually seen there the princes of the blood and the cardinals. I have often seen there also Monsieur, either on arriving from St. Cloud to see the king, or arriving from the Council of Despatches (the only one he entered), give the king his napkin and remain standing. A little while afterward, the king, seeing that he did not go away, asked him if he would not sit down; he bowed, and the king ordered a seat to be brought for him. A stool was put behind him. Some moments after the king said, 'Nay then, sit down, my brother.' Monsieur bowed and seated himself until the end of the dinner,[1] when he presented the napkin. At other times when he came from St. Cloud, the king, on arriving at table, asked for a plate for Monsieur, or asked him if he would dine. If he refused, he went away a moment after, and there

[1] A manuscript in the library at Versailles gives the menu of one of the king's dinners, for "two dishes, two plates, five courses, and the *hors-d'œuvre,*" as follows:

"*Potages:* 2 chapons vieux pour potage de santé;—4 perdrix aux choux.

"*Petits potages:* 6 pigeonneaux de volière pour bisque;—1 de crêtes et béatilles.

"*Deux petits potages hors-d'œuvre:* 1 chapon haché pour un;—1 perdrix pour l'autre.

"*Entrées:* 1 quartier de veau et une pièce autour; le tout de 20 livres;—12 pigeons pour tourte.

"*Petites entrées:* 6 poulets fricassés;—2 perdrix en hachis.

"*Quatre petites entrées hors-d'œuvre:* 3 perdrix au jus;—6 tourtes à la braise;—2 dindons grillés;—3 poulets gras aux truffes.

"*Rôt:* 2 chapons gras;—9 poulets;—9 pigeons;—2 hétoudeaux;—6 perdrix;—4 tourtes."

Dussieux, II, p. 141.

was no mention of a seat; if he accepted, the king asked for a plate for him. The table was square, and Monsieur placed himself at one side, his back to the cabinet. Then the grand chamberlain, or the first gentleman of the Chamber, gave him drink and plates, taking them from him as he finished with them, exactly as he served the king; but Monsieur received all this attention with strongly marked politeness. When he dined thus with the king, he much enlivened the conversation. The king ordinarily spoke little at table unless some familiar courtier was near. It was the same at his *lever*. Ladies were scarcely ever seen at these dinners. I have, however, seen the Maréchale de la Mothe, who came in because she had been accustomed to do so as governess to the Children of France, and who received a seat because she was a duchess. Grand dinners were very rare, taking place only on grand occasions, and then ladies were present." [1]

The king made but two meals a day, for the breakfast which he took at his *lever* was a mere nothing. He had a hearty appetite, and was a heavy eater.[2] "He ate so prodigiously and so solidly morning and evening," says Saint-Simon, "that no one could get accustomed to see it." Fagon was continually preaching moderation in this respect, and squabbling continually with the officers of the *Maison du Roi,* who answered that it was their business to feed the king, and Fagon's to doctor him. He had to fight constantly the bad results of the king's overeating, and in spite of the unfavorable opinion of the doctor's methods, as given by Saint-Simon and the Palatine, a perusal of the *Journal de la Santé du Roi* convinces one that it required great skill on the part of Fagon to keep the Grand Monarch in good

[1] Saint-Simon, III, p. 24.

[2] After the king's death, the post-mortem threw some light on this subject. "His stomach above all astonished, and also his bowels by their volume and extent, whence it came that he was such a great yet uniform eater." Saint-Simon, II, p. 348.

health until his seventy-seventh year. At the last, Fagon was old and had lost his grip, and his treatment of the king in his final illness was undoubtedly a mistake. Fagon was more the master at Versailles than at Marly. At Versailles the king's dinner was *au petit couvert,* and his supper *au grand couvert,* but at Marly both dinner and supper were *au grand couvert.* The king loved the Marlys, though they frequently made him ill. There were three reasons for the king's continuing his course in spite of his doctor: his natural inclination, the delicious dishes that La Quintinie took pains to send him, and the fact that the courtiers desired to see him eat to advantage. "Temptation," said Fagon, "prevents him from restraining himself."

"All the year round the king ate at supper a prodigious quantity of salad. His soups, several of which he partook of morning and evening, were full of gravy, and were of exceeding strength, and everything that was served to him was full of spice, to double the usual extent, and very strong also. This regimen and the sweetmeats together Fagon did not like, and sometimes while seeing the king eat, he would make most amusing grimaces, without daring, however, to say anything except now and then to Livry and Benoist. . . . The king never ate any kind of venison or water-fowl, but otherwise partook of everything, fête-days and fast-days alike, except that during the last twenty years of his life he observed some few days of Lent. . . . For many years he had drunk nothing but Burgundy wine, half mixed with water, and so old that it was used up, instead of the best champagne which he had used all his life.[1] He would pleasantly say sometimes that foreign lords who were anxious to taste the wine he used were often mightily deceived. At no time had he ever drunk pure wine, or made use in any way of spirits, or even tea, coffee, or chocolate.

[1] That is, up to 1694, when Fagon substituted the Burgundy.

Upon rising, instead of a little bread and wine and water, he had taken for a long time two glasses of sage and veronica; often between his meals, and always on going to bed, glasses of water with a little orange-flower water in them, and always iced. Even on the days when he had medicine he drank this, and always also at his meals, between which he never ate anything except some cinnamon lozenges which he put into his pocket at his dessert, with some biscuits for the dogs he kept in his cabinets." [1]

THE AFTERNOON

"Upon leaving the table the king immediately entered his cabinet. That was the time for distinguished people to speak to him. He stopped at the door a moment to listen, then entered; very rarely did any one follow him, never without asking him for permission to do so, and for this few had the courage. If followed he placed himself in the embrasure of the window nearest to the door of the cabinet, which immediately closed of itself, and which you were obliged to open yourself on quitting the king. This was also the time for the bastards and the valets. The king amused himself by feeding his dogs,[2] and remained with them more or less time, then asked for his wardrobe, changed before the very few distinguished people it pleased the first gentleman of the Chamber to admit there, and immediately went out by the back stairs into the court of marble to get into his coach. From the bottom of that staircase to the coach, any one spoke to him who wished.

"The king was very fond of air and exercise, and when

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 347.

[2] Desportes painted the portraits of the favorite setters and pointers of Louis XIV, and these pictures, formerly in the king's bedchamber at Marly, are to-day at the Louvre. The dogs were named *Diane, Blonde, Bonne, Nonne, Ponne, Folle,* and *Mitte.*

deprived of them his health suffered; he had headaches and vapors caused by the undue use he had formerly made of perfumes, so that for many years he could not endure any, except the odor of orange-flowers; therefore if you had to approach anywhere near him you did well not to carry them. As he was but little sensitive to heat or cold, or even to rain, the weather was seldom sufficiently bad to prevent his going abroad. He went out for three objects: stag-hunting, once or more each week; shooting in his parks (and no man handled a gun with more grace or skill), once or twice each week; and walking in his gardens for exercise and to see his workmen. The stag-hunts were on an extensive scale. At Fontainebleau every one went who wished; elsewhere only those were allowed to go who had obtained the permission once for all, and those who had obtained leave to wear the *justaucorps,* a blue uniform with gold and silver lace, lined with red. The king did not like too many people at these hunts. He did not care for you to go if you were not fond of the chase. He thought that ridiculous, and never bore ill will to those who stopped away altogether." [1]

For many years the king followed the hunt on horseback; but in 1683 he was thrown from his horse in the hunt at Fontainebleau, and broke his arm. Thereafter he hunted usually in a calèche, which in his case was a light chaise on two wheels, with a hood. He rode alone at full speed, driving his four horses with a grace and dexterity not equaled by the best coachmen. When he went to shoot in his parks, he was attended by pages and gun-bearers.

In his promenades in the gardens of Versailles and Trianon all the courtiers could follow him, but elsewhere only those holding the chief posts were permitted to do so. In the latter years of his life the king frequently promenaded in his gardens in a wheeled chair, pushed by valets, with a

[1] Saint-Simon, III, p. 25.

Louis XIV in the Gardens of Trianon

handle in front which enabled him to steer himself. The courtiers followed on foot, or in chairs of like pattern. The stag-hunts and the promenades were magnificent spectacles.

On returning from hunting or driving, the king's coach pulled up at the steps of the marble courtyard, and from the moment that the Grand Monarch alighted from his coach until he reached his private staircase, any one was at liberty to speak to him. He went up to his bedchamber, changed his dress with the usual ceremonies, and passed into his cabinet, where he rested or worked for an hour or more. Then, followed by the captain of the guards, he went to the apartments of Madame de Maintenon, and on the way any one spoke to him who desired to do so.

THE SUPPER

"At ten o'clock his supper was served. The captain of the guards announced this to him. A quarter of an hour after, the king came to supper, and from the antechamber of Madame de Maintenon to the table, any one spoke to him who wished. The supper was always on a grand scale, the royal family (that is, the sons and daughters of France) at table, and a large number of courtiers and ladies present, sitting or standing, and on the evening before the journey to Marly all those ladies who wished to take part in it. That was called presenting yourself for Marly. Men asked in the morning, simply saying to the king, 'Sire, Marly.' In later years the king grew tired of this, and a valet wrote up in the gallery the names of those who asked. The ladies continued to present themselves."[1]

The supper was served in the first antechamber (between the Hall of the King's Guards and the *Œil-de-Bœuf*) and with much ceremony by the officers of the *Maison du Roi.*

[1] Saint-Simon, III, p. 26.

This antechamber is not as large as some of the other private apartments of the king, and the crowd of courtiers, who stood while royalty supped, must have filled the room completely.

"In general," says the Palatine, "the king would have no persons at his table but members of the royal family; as for the princesses of the blood, there were so many of them that the ordinary table would not have held them, and, indeed, when we were all there, it was quite full. The king used to sit in the middle, and had Monseigneur and the Duc de Bourgogne at his right,[1] and the Duchesse de Bourgogne and the Duchesse de Berry at his left; on one of the sides Monsieur and I sat; and on the other, my son and his wife;[2] the other parts of the table were reserved for the noblemen in waiting, who did not take their places behind the king, but opposite to him. When the princesses of the blood or any other ladies were received at the king's table, we were waited on, not by noblemen, but by other officers of the *Maison du Roi.* The king upon such occasions was waited on by his first *maître d'hôtel.* . . . The king, Monsieur, Monseigneur, and the Duc de Berry were all great eaters. I have seen the king eat four platefuls of different soups, a whole pheasant, a partridge, a plateful of salad, mutton hashed with garlic, two good-sized slices of ham, a dish of pastry, and afterward fruit and sweetmeats. The king and Monsieur were very fond of hard eggs."[3] At the conclusion of supper the king passed through the grand antechamber to his bedchamber.

[1] This does not agree with Saint-Simon's statement, "Except at the army, the king never ate with any man, under whatever circumstances." But as Saint-Simon himself mentions Monsieur's dining with Louis XIV, he means, perhaps, any man outside of the royal family.

[2] The Duc and Duchesse de Chartres.

[3] Memoirs of Elizabeth-Charlotte, Duchesse d'Orléans, pp. 67–68.

THE EVENING

"On leaving table," says Saint-Simon, "the king stopped less than a half-quarter of an hour with his back to the balustrade at the foot of his bed. He found there in a circle all the ladies who had been at his supper, and who came there to wait for him a little before he left table, except the ladies who sat, who came out after him, and who, in the suite of the princes and princesses who had supped with him, advanced one by one and made him a curtsy, and filled up the remainder of the standing circle; for a space was always left for them by the other ladies. The men stood behind. The king amused himself by observing the dresses and countenances of the ladies and the grace of their curtsies, said a word to the princes and princesses who had supped with him, and who closed the circle near him on either hand, then bowed to the ladies on right and left, bowed once or twice more as he went away, with a grace and majesty unparalleled, spoke sometimes, but very rarely, to some lady in passing, entered the first cabinet, where he gave the order, and then advanced to the second cabinet, the doors from the first to the second always remaining open. There he placed himself in an arm-chair; Monsieur, while he was there, in another; the Duchesse de Bourgogne, Madame (but only after the death of Monsieur), the Duchesse de Berry (after her marriage), the three bastard daughters,[1] and Madame du Maine (when she was at Versailles), on stools on each side. Monseigneur, the Duc de Bourgogne, the Duc de Berry, the Duc d'Orléans,[2] the Duc du Maine, the Comte de Toulouse, M. le Duc (as the husband of Mme. la Duchesse), and afterward the two

[1] The Princesse de Conti, daughter of the king and Mlle. de la Vallière, and Mme. la Duchesse and the Duchesse de Chartres, daughters of the king and Madame de Montespan.

[2] The Duc de Chartres, who took the title at the death of his father.

sons of M. du Maine, when they had grown a little, and D'Antin came also, all standing."[1] After spending about an hour in conversation with the royal family, the king said good night, and passed into his bedchamber for the ceremony of the *coucher*.

THE COUCHER

While the king was still in the cabinet with his family, two officers of the Goblet carried into the bedchamber the collation for the night, bread, wine, and water. A *valet de chambre* received this collation, and one of the officers of the Goblet made the trial before him; later on the *valet de chambre* made the trial himself in the presence of the first *valet de chambre*. Other valets placed the king's dressing-gown on an arm-chair, and the slippers before it, and in front of a second chair near the bed two cushions on which the king was to kneel at his prayers, as in the morning; they prepared the night-lamp as well. Before the king came, the courtiers having the *entrées* entered the chamber, which was quite full.

The *grand coucher:*[2] "On coming out of his cabinet, the king found at the door of the bedchamber the master of the Wardrobe, to whom he gave his hat, gloves, and cane, and by whom they were handed to a valet of the Wardrobe. The king unfastened his sword-belt, which the master of the Wardrobe took off, handing sword and belt to a valet of the Wardrobe, who carried them to the toilet-table. The usher of the Chamber advanced before the king, who went behind the balustrade to his bed, took holy water, and knelt on the cushions before the arm-chair to say his prayers. At the end, the almoner on duty, who held a lighted candle, re-

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 121.

[2] Owing to an attack of gout the king had had for some time, the *grand coucher* was discontinued about 1705, and the court finished at the rising from supper.

peated in a low voice the prayer, *Quæsumus omnipotens Deus, ut famulus tuus Ludovicus rex noster,* etc. The king took the holy water, making the sign of the cross, and rose from his knees. Then the first *valet de chambre,* having taken the candle from the almoner, received from the king his watch, and the small bag containing the relics, and continued to walk before His Majesty. The usher made room for the king through the crowd from the balustrade to his chair, and having reached it, His Majesty was asked by the grand chamberlain, or by the first gentleman of the Chamber, to whom he wished the candle to be given." [1]

As the bedchamber was well lighted, the candle was superfluous, but it was one of those trifles in which the king excelled, and the giving of which he had raised to the rank of a fine art. His Majesty glanced over the assembly, and named the man he desired to honor. "It was an honor," says Saint-Simon, "which he bestowed sometimes upon one, sometimes upon another, according to his whim, but which, by his manner of bestowing it, was always coveted as a great distinction."

"The king then removed his blue ribbon; the master of the Wardrobe drew off his coat and vest; and the king himself took off his cravat. All these articles were handed to the officers of the Wardrobe. His Majesty seated himself, and the first *valet de chambre* unfastened the diamond buckle of the right garter, while the first valet of the Wardrobe did the same for the left. The valets of the Chamber drew off the king's shoes and knee-breeches, and the pages of the Chamber brought his slippers and dressing-gown." [2]

The dressing-gown was held up before the king to conceal him from the crowd when he took off his shirt and put on his night-dress. The night-dress was presented by a prince of the blood, or by the grand chamberlain, with the

[1] État de la France (1712). [2] Idem.

same formalities with which the shirt had been presented at the *lever*. Having received from the grand chamberlain the little bag containing the relics, the king passed the cord about his neck, and put on his dressing-gown. Then he rose and said good night to the courtiers by a bow. The ushers of the Chamber cried aloud, "Gentlemen, pass on!"; and while the courtiers were retiring, the king stood by the chimneypiece, giving the order to the captain of the guards. Meanwhile the first *valet de chambre* had taken the candle from the nobleman to whom it had been given, and had presented it to one of his own friends, who had thus the privilege of remaining at the *petit coucher*.

The *petit coucher:* There were now in the king's chamber the following persons: those who had the *grandes entrées* (who had been present in the morning when the king was still in bed); those having the first *entrée;* the officers and valets of the Chamber and of the Wardrobe; the first doctor and the surgeons; and, from time to time, certain nobles to whom the king had granted the privilege.

"When the court had gone out, the king sat down on a folding-seat which had been prepared in front of the balustrade of his bed, with a cushion before it. The barber removed His Majesty's wig and dressed his hair, and a *valet de chambre* held a mirror before the king. A valet of the Wardrobe brought the nightcap and handkerchiefs, and presented them to the grand master of the Wardrobe, who gave them to the king. A service of silver-gilt was then presented by the princes of the blood, that the king might wash his face and hands; in the absence of the princes, the grand chamberlain, the first gentleman of the Chamber, or the grand master of the Wardrobe could act for them. After washing, the king named to the grand chamberlain the hour at which he desired to be awakened in the morning, and

told the grand master of the Wardrobe what dress he would wear on the following day." [1]

This closed the *petit coucher,* and the usher of the Chamber made all those having the *entrées* leave the chamber, and went out himself when the first gentleman had given the order for the *lever* on the morrow. The valets of the Wardrobe carried the king's clothing away to the rooms of the Wardrobe, and the valets of the Chamber lighted the grand chamberlain and the first gentleman through the antechambers. The first doctor left a moment later, and then there was nobody with the king but the first *valet de chambre* and the *garçons* of the Chamber. The latter prepared the king's bed, and also the camp-bed for the first *valet de chambre.*

The king, meanwhile, went into his cabinet, where he remained more or less time, feeding his dogs and playing with them. The Sieur Antoine, the gun-bearer who had charge of the dogs, was present. Louis, in nightcap, dressing-gown, and slippers, could draw a long breath, if he liked, at last.

When the king had gone to bed, the first *valet de chambre* closed the bed-curtains, while the *garçons* put out all the lights and lit the night-lamp; and after the *garçons* had gone out, the first *valet de chambre* closed the doors. Then, lighting his own candle, the first valet undressed, and got into his camp-bed before the gilded balustrade. Beyond that balustrade, by the faint light, there loomed among the shadows a white-plumed canopy and crimson curtains. The Grand Monarch slept.

[1] État de la France (1712).

III

HIS METHOD OF WORK

IN 1661, when Louis announced his intention of being his own prime minister, the courtiers were at first astonished and then cynical. A young man of twenty-three, who had at hand all the appliances of pleasure, had informed the world that the first business of a king was work. The court smiled, and thinking that six months or a year would settle the matter, began to look about for a successor to Mazarin; but Louis never wavered, and persevered in his resolution for fifty-four years.

In his *Memoirs*,[1] designed for the instruction of Monseigneur, and prepared from his notes and under his eyes by Pellisson in 1670, Louis reveals himself. "It may happen, my son," he says, "that you will begin to read these *Memoirs* at an age when one usually fears rather than loves work, being too glad to have escaped from subjection to teachers and masters, and to have no more fixed hours, no more long and uncertain application. Here I will only tell you that it is always by work that one reigns, and that there is ingratitude to God, injustice and tyranny to men, in desiring the one without the other. Those conditions of royalty, which may sometimes seem hard and vexatious to you, would appear pleasant and easy if it were a question of attaining them.

[1] The original manuscripts were confided by Louis XVI, in 1786, to the Comte de Grimoard. They were published in 1806 by Treuttel & Würtz.

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Jean Baptiste Colbert

. . . I made it a rule to work twice a day, even after dinner, at the despatch of ordinary business, not failing to apply myself at any other time to whatever might arise unexpectedly. I cannot tell you how fruitful I immediately found that resolution. I felt my mind and my courage elevated. I was quite different. I discovered in myself that which I did not know, and I reproached myself with joy for having been so long ignorant of it. The first sense of timidity that comes with decision caused me pain, but it passed off in less than no time. It seemed to me then that I was, and was born to be, king." And in revealing the secret of his governing power to his son, the king adds: "I am aware that I diminish by so much the only, or almost the only, merit I can hope for in the world."

The king held his councils, as he did everything else, with great regularity. At Versailles they met in his cabinet, but when he took medicine, or had the gout, he held them none the less, and they met in his bedchamber. Dangeau mentions as an extraordinary fact, and quite without example, that on the 3d of November, 1692, the king went to spend a week at Marly, and gave his ministers leave of absence for that time. Pursuing his usual policy toward the nobility, the king kept them out of his councils, and chose his ministers from the middle class. They were responsible to him alone. Colbert, the greatest of them, and one of the greatest ministers France has ever had, died in 1683, and Louis never found his like again. His posts were divided between Seignelai, Louvois, and Pelletier.

The Council of State was supreme over all the departments of government, being at once legislative, executive, and judicial. It was divided into subordinate councils: the Council of the King, the Council of Finance, the Council of Despatches, the Council of Parties. Important questions of internal or foreign policy were settled in the Council of the

King. The Council of Finance directed trade, agriculture, and public works, and was supposed to supervise the Controller-General of Finance; it did so during the reign of Louis XIV, but later the Controller-General with his thirty-two intendants absorbed and managed the whole internal administration of the country, and this bureaucracy became an evil.

The Council of State met on Sundays, Mondays, and Wednesdays; the Council of Finance, on Tuesdays and Saturdays. On Mondays after dinner the king worked with Pelletier upon the fortifications, and every evening, in the apartments of Madame de Maintenon, he worked with Ponchartrain, the Minister of the Navy, or with Barbezieux, the Minister of War. He wrote his important letters himself, but every letter written in his name was read to him. As time went on, his power of work and his love of it increased, and in spite of the trammels of etiquette he despatched an immense amount of business each week. The concentration of the heads of all departments at the palace of Versailles enabled him to do this. "His constant residence at Versailles," says Saint-Simon, "caused a continual coming together of officials and persons employed, which kept everything going, got through more business and gave more access to ministers and their various bureaus in one day than would have been possible in a fortnight had the court been in Paris. The benefit to his service of the king's precision was incredible. It imposed orderliness on everybody, and secured despatch and facility in his affairs."

The king did not grant audiences too easily; he could not do so, or he would have been overwhelmed by them. Considering the size of the court, and the press of business on his hands, it must be admitted that access to him was not difficult; and, as has been mentioned, there were six times in the day when any of his subjects could address him and present petitions. Although these latter opportunities were

each of brief duration,—while he passed through the gallery and state apartments to and from chapel in the morning, across the marble courtyard to and from his coach in the afternoon, and through the antechambers to and from the apartments of Madame de Maintenon in the evening,—yet his life was so regular, and he came and went with such unvarying punctuality, that it was a simple matter for a petitioner to calculate by his watch the movements of the king, and to take his position accordingly.

Louis was not only a man of system, but a man of detail. Saint-Simon sneers at the latter: "Naturally fond of trifles, he unceasingly occupied himself with the most petty details of his troops, his household, his palaces, his table expenses." Saint-Simon considered such matters beneath a man of rank, but the king did not think so; and more than one nobleman at Versailles might have followed Louis's example in this respect with profit. To govern France, to govern Spain, to impose his supremacy upon Europe, and to push his schemes of colonization and empire in North America, Madagascar, India, and Siam, demanded of the king, and of his ministers, enormous labor; but, notwithstanding that, it appears that the petty details of troops, palaces, and kitchens were not neglected.

In short, if the monarchical machine ran well, no small part of the success was due to the fact that Louis himself did all his work each day with clock-like regularity; and to dub him a king of fêtes and reviews is to render him scant justice. With the exception of Napoleon, France has never had a sovereign who worked harder or more regularly than Louis XIV. "There are only he and I," said the emperor. "He had 400,000 men under arms, and a King of France who could collect such a host could be no ordinary man."

IV

HIS PERSONAL APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER

IT is easier to criticize Louis XIV than to understand him. He raised the French monarchy to its zenith, and the collapse of that monarchy seventy-four years after his death was, and still is, a severe blow to his reputation. He will never be a popular hero; but because his ideals and theories no longer move the world, it would be as absurd to suppose that he was not in his day in touch with the spirit of his age as to fancy that the powerful impression he made on his contemporaries was due solely to his rank and position. Neither his predecessor nor his successor enjoyed anything like it. Let us consider him under three aspects—as a man, as a monarch, as an idealist; in other words, as Louis de Bourbon, as the King of France and Navarre, and as the Sun King.

LOUIS DE BOURBON

That the eldest son of Louis XIII and Anne of Austria was physically fit for the post he filled is without question. The evidence on that point is overwhelming. "The stature of a hero," says Saint-Simon, his bitterest antagonist, and the last man in the world to be accused of flattery in this connection, "his whole figure so naturally endowed with majesty that it was equally evident in the slightest gestures and the most ordinary actions, without any air of pride, but simple gravity;

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Louis XIV

so admirably well made and proportioned that sculptors might have sought him for their model; a perfect face, with the finest countenance and the grandest air that ever man had. All these advantages were enhanced by the most natural grace, and, what has been given to no other, he wore this air of grandeur and majesty in his dressing-gown, to the point of one's being unable to bear his glance, just the same as in the attire of fêtes or ceremonies, or on horseback at the head of his troops. He excelled in all bodily exercises, and he liked to see them well done. Neither fatigue nor inclemency of weather told on him, or made any impression on that heroic face; showing through rain, snow, cold, sweat, or covered with dust, it was always the same. I have frequently witnessed this with admiration, for, unless it were weather of extreme and rare severity, nothing kept him from going out each day and staying out a long time. A voice whose tones answered to all the rest, a facility of speaking well and listening courteously, and, better than any other, much reserve, politeness always grave, always majestic, always discriminating according to age, rank, sex, and for women ever that natural gallantry. So much for the exterior, which never had its like, or anything approaching it."

The Palatine, without having Saint-Simon's genius for portraiture, is in accord: "It cannot be denied that Louis XIV was the finest man in his kingdom. No person had a better appearance than he. His figure was agreeable, his legs well made, his feet small, his voice pleasant; he was lusty in proportion; and, in short, no fault could be found with his person."

Spanheim, the ambassador from Brandenburg, saw the king in 1690, and wrote of him: "The attractions of his person are his figure, his carriage, air, and fine bearing, an exterior full of grandeur and majesty, and a bodily constitution fit to sustain the fatigues and the burden of so great a post,

to which may be added that he most happily mingles greatness and familiarity in his private conversations, and bears himself in them without either haughtiness or over-condescension."

Louis, therefore, had great personal charm; it was of untold advantage to him, and he retained it until a few months before his death. "In the midst of all other men his stature, his carriage, his beauty, and the grand mien which survived that beauty, even to the tones of his voice, and the alertness and naturally majestic grace of all his person, caused him to be distinguished to the day of his death as the King Bee. It may also be said that, had he been born only a private gentleman, he would equally have possessed the secret of fêtes and pleasure, of gallantry and fascination," [1] Amid so many perfections there seems to have been but one flaw, mentioned by the Palatine, and which probably appeared late in life: "The king was in the habit of keeping his mouth open in an awkward way." [2]

He loved fresh air and exercise, hunting and shooting, horses and dogs, and had all manly tastes and habits. He danced well, played tennis and mall well, drove himself better than the best coachmen, and was a splendid horseman all his life. Stag-hunting and shooting were his favorite forms of the chase. An Englishman named Hammer found him an expert fencer.

His dress, so magnificent during his love-making days, became much simpler later in life, but at no time was there anything of the fop about him. "He was always clad in dresses more or less brown, lightly embroidered, but never at the edges, sometimes with nothing but a gold button, sometimes black velvet. He had always a vest of cloth, or of red, blue, or green satin, much embroidered. He wore no

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 357.
[2] Memoirs of Elizabeth-Charlotte, Duchesse d'Orléans, p. 67.

ring, and no jewels, except in the buckles of his shoes, garters, and hat, the latter always trimmed with Spanish point, with a white feather. He had always the *cordon bleu* over his coat, except at fêtes, when he wore it under his coat, with precious stones, worth eight or ten million livres, attached." [1] But whether his attire was simple or superb, whether he wore a coat of brown velvet lightly embroidered, or a coat of cloth of gold trimmed with diamonds, Louis himself was always superior to his apparel. He was never a bedecked and bejeweled clothes-horse like his brother, Monsieur.

As a man, then, Louis was well built, handsome, and vigorous, physically fit for the post he held. However, he might have been all that, and a monarch to boot, and yet have failed to produce the impression that his presence undoubtedly did produce, when, of a morning, as the hour struck for mass, the usher of the Cabinet, opening the glass doors, announced to the glittering world that filled the gallery, "Gentlemen, the king!"

THE KING OF FRANCE AND NAVARRE

As king, therefore let us now consider him; and at the outset it may be said that it is only as king that one can rightly consider him at all. Before he reached manhood, before he reached youth, while he was still a child of five years, he was king. Let him ransack his memory as he would, he could have found there little that antedated his father's death and his own accession to the throne. From the beginning, he was king. As for private life, he had none. He fancied that he had, however. He built Marly for that purpose. At Versailles he was surrounded by three or four thousand courtiers; at Marly, by five or six hundred: at Versailles all the nobles

[1] Saint-Simon, III, p. 28.

stood in his presence; at Marly a limited number could sit down: at Versailles he alone was covered at the promenade; at Marly, on quitting the château, he said aloud to those who followed him, "Your hats, gentlemen!" That was his idea of private life; and to attain it it was necessary to construct a palace and gardens costing more than twelve millions. His *lever* and *coucher* were not less ceremonious at Marly than at Versailles; he dined and supped *au grand couvert*. When he passed a quiet hour with his family, he alone had an arm-chair; his daughters sat on stools, and his sons stood. At all hours, and in all places, he was king, and had been so from his earliest recollection. Therefore, except in the matter of physique, it is not easy to separate the man from the monarch.

But if he could recall with difficulty a period when he was not king, he could distinctly remember those bitter years of his minority, when Mazarin ruled and amassed riches; when the French nobility reared and pranced and kicked over the traces; when civil war raged; when the Grande Mademoiselle turned the cannon of the Bastille against the royal troops; and when he, the king, abandoned and neglected, was fished out of a basin in the garden of the Palais Royal, and was bundled by night out of Paris to sleep on straw at St. Germain. In those hard years he had torn sheets on his bed, and hardly a whole coat on his back, but he learned valuable lessons, lessons which were of much more service to him than the smattering of Latin he got from La Porte. At twenty-three he took the reins in his own hands, resolved to rule as well as reign, resolved to make himself great and glorious, resolved to raise France to a proud preëminence, resolved to be obeyed. It does not come within the limits of this book to discuss his foreign and colonial policy, or his wars and conquests. Let us consider now how he fashioned himself for kingship.

Anne of Austria, regent, asking a blessing for her children, Louis XIV, and Philippe of France

Nature and fortune had joined hands to aid him in his work. Nature had favored his person; fortune had placed him on the French throne at a time when men hoped for all things from monarchy, and when they believed in the divine right of kings. If that belief had not been in the hearts of both subjects and sovereign, Louis could never have become the king he was. He took himself in hand; he calculated everything; he left nothing to chance; he kept his kingship as close to him as his skin; until at last, through practice, he played his rôle to perfection, without apparent effort. He became the great exemplar of majesty. "Even to his slightest gesture, his walk, his deportment, his countenance, all was circumspect, becoming, noble, grand, majestic, imposing, and yet quite natural." [1] Desiring to secure for France supremacy in arms, he wished not less to secure for her supremacy in manners. To be the exemplar of majesty was not enough. He became the type of courtesy; and the politeness he demanded from others, he himself displayed. "Never was man so naturally polite, or of a politeness so measured, so graduated, so adapted to person, time, and place. Toward women his politeness was without parallel. For ladies he took his hat off completely, but to a greater or less extent; for titled people, half off, holding it in his hand or against his ear some instants, more or less marked. For the nobility he contented himself by putting his hand to his hat. He took it off for the princes of the blood, as for the ladies. If he accosted ladies, he did not cover himself until he had quitted them. Never did he pass the humblest peasant woman without raising his hat; even to chambermaids, that he knew to be such, as often happened at Marly. All this was out of doors, for in the house he was never covered. His reverences, more or less marked, but always light, were incomparable for their grace and manner." [2]

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 367. [2] Idem.

But imposing as he was in daily life, he had within him, and this renders him unique, a reserve fund of majesty. On occasions of ceremony he drew on that fund, and intensified his grand air. Just what that air of grandeur was it is impossible to say; but all the evidence of contemporaries makes it clear that it was something real and powerful, that it was natural, that it was not pomposity. No artist has been able to reproduce it in the portraits of the king. Louis alone had the secret, and carried it with him to the grave. Whatever it was, behind it lay the real force of the man, his faith in himself, and his firm belief in his divine right. "In serious things," says Saint-Simon, "such as ambassadors' audiences, no man ever impressed me so deeply, and one had to begin by accustoming oneself to see him if one would not run the risk of stopping short in addressing him. His answers on these occasions were always brief, exact, full, and very rarely without something pleasing, sometimes even flattering, when the address deserved it. The respect also which his presence inspired, wherever he might be, imposed silence and even a sort of fear." Though he proved on more than one occasion that he was not afraid of Louis, Saint-Simon speaks repeatedly of "that terrifying majesty so natural to the king." There have been many kings in France, but there has been only one whose majesty was proclaimed a terror by his enemy.

Louis possessed, then, in a supreme degree the virtues of courtesy, majesty, and grace. But to become the Grand Monarch it was not sufficient that he should cultivate certain traits of character; he must repress other traits. He bridled his tongue. He never took advantage of his position to indulge at the expense of others in cutting or ironical remarks, so terrible from the lips of a man whom none can answer. If he could not say anything pleasant or flattering, he said nothing. "Never did disobliging words escape him; and if

he had to blame, to reprimand or correct, which was very rare, it was nearly always with goodness, never, except on one occasion (the admonition of Courtenvaux), with anger or severity. Never did man give with better grace than Louis XIV, or augment so much, in this way, the price of his benefits. Never did man sell to better profit his words, even his smiles, nay, his looks." [1]

He had wit and a sense of humor, but he found it necessary to repress them. "When the king pleased," says the Palatine, "he could be one of the most agreeable and amiable men in the world; but it was first necessary that he should be intimately acquainted with persons. He used to joke in a very comical and amusing manner." However, the Palatine was a privileged person; for example: "To amuse the king, I sometimes said whatever came into my head, without the least ceremony, and often made him laugh heartily." [2] Very few people were on any such footing. If the king joked in an amusing manner with the Palatine, he probably did so with the Duchesse de Bourgogne, and with Monsieur, but never with his courtiers. His sense of humor, however, got the better of him occasionally. Saint-Simon relates an instance of this: "Heudicourt the younger had made a song upon the grand provost and his family. It was so simple, so true to nature, withal so pleasant, that some one having whispered it in the ear of the Maréchal de Boufflers at chapel, he could not refrain from bursting into laughter, although he was in attendance at the mass of the king. The maréchal was the gravest and most serious man in all France, and the greatest slave to decorum. The king turned round, therefore, in surprise, which was considerably augmented when he saw the Maréchal de Boufflers nigh to bursting with laughter, and the tears running down his cheeks. On re-

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 367.
[2] Memoirs of the Duchesse d'Orléans, p. 53.

turning to his cabinet, he called the maréchal, and asked what had put him in that state at the mass. The maréchal repeated the song to the king. Thereupon the king burst out laughing louder than the maréchal, and for a whole fortnight afterward could not help smiling whenever he saw the grand provost or any of his family." Heudicourt's song must have been very witty.

No man had his nerves under better control than Louis, and nothing was more rare than for him to lose his temper. Saint-Simon mentions but three occasions when he did so. Here is the first: " It happened that Louvois, not content with the terrible executions in the Palatinate, which he had counseled, wished to burn Trèves. He proposed it to the king. A dispute arose between them, but the king would not be persuaded. Some days afterward Louvois, who had the fault of obstinacy, came as usual to work with the king in Madame de Maintenon's apartments. At the end of the sitting, he said that he felt convinced that it was scrupulousness alone which had hindered the king from consenting to so necessary an act as the burning of Trèves, and that he had, therefore, taken the responsibility on himself by sending a courier with orders to set fire to the place at once. The king was immediately, and contrary to his nature, so transported with anger that he seized the tongs, and was about to make a run at Louvois, when Madame de Maintenon placed herself between them, crying, ' Oh, Sire, what are you going to do? ' and took the tongs from his hands. Louvois, meanwhile, gained the door. The king cried after him to recall him, and said, with flashing eyes, ' Despatch a courier instantly with a counter-order, and let him arrive in time; for, know this: if a single house is burned, your head shall answer for it! ' Louvois, more dead than alive, hastened away at once. Of course he had sent off no courier. He said he had, believing that by this trick the king, though he might be

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The Marriage of Louis XIV and Marie Thérèse

angry, would be led to give way. He had reckoned wrongly, however, as we have seen." In this case certainly the king's wrath was justified, for the minister's conduct was without excuse.

On the second occasion, Louis's pride was cut to the quick by the disgraceful exhibition of cowardice shown by his favorite son, the Duc du Maine, when with the army. "He felt deeply for that dear son whose troops had become the laughing-stock of the army; he felt the railleries that, as the gazettes showed him, foreigners were heaping upon his forces; and his vexation was inconceivable. The king, so equal in his manners, so thoroughly master of his lightest movements, even upon the gravest occasions, succumbed under this event. On rising from the table at Marly he saw a servant who, while taking away the dessert, helped himself to a biscuit, which he put in his pocket. On the instant, the king forgot his dignity, and cane in hand ran to this valet (who little suspected what was in store for him), struck him, abused him, and broke the cane upon his body. The truth is, it was only a reed, and snapped easily. However, with the stump in his hand, the king walked away like a man quite beside himself, continuing to abuse this valet, and entered Madame de Maintenon's apartment, where he remained nearly an hour. Upon coming out he met Père La Chaise. 'My father,' said the king to him, in a very loud voice, 'I have beaten a knave and broken my cane over his shoulders, but I do not think I have offended God.' Everybody around trembled at this public confession, and the poor priest muttered a semblance of approval between his teeth, to avoid irritating the king more. The noise that the affair made and the terror it inspired may be imagined; for some time nobody could divine the cause, although everybody easily understood that that which had appeared could not be the real one." This is the second instance of loss of temper mentioned by

Saint-Simon. The Palatine, without referring to this case, speaks of two other occasions on which the king struck valets: "I never saw the king beat but two men, and they both well deserved it. The first was a valet, who would not let him enter the garden during one of his own fêtes. The other was a pickpocket, whom the king saw emptying the pocket of M. de Villars. Louis XIV, who was on horseback, rode toward the thief and struck him with his cane; the rascal cried out, 'Murder! I shall be killed!' which made us all laugh, and the king laughed also. He had the thief taken, and made him give up the purse, but he did not have him hanged."

The third case given by Saint-Simon, the admonition of Courtenvaux, is as follows: "Courtenvaux, eldest son of M. de Louvois, was commander of the Cent-Suisses; fond of obscure debauches; with a ridiculous voice, miserly, quarrelsome, though modest and respectful; and, in fine, a very stupid fellow. The king, more eager to know all that was passing than most people believed, although they gave him credit for not a little curiosity in this respect, had authorized Bontemps to engage a number of Swiss in addition to those posted at the doors and in the parks and gardens. These attendants had orders to stroll morning, noon, and night, along the corridors, the passages, the staircases, even into the private places, and, when it was fine, in the courtyards and gardens; and in secret to watch people, to follow them, to notice where they went, to notice who was there, to listen to all conversations they could hear, and to make reports of their discoveries. This was done at Versailles, at Marly, at Trianon, at Fontainebleau, and in all places where the king was. These new attendants vexed Courtenvaux considerably, for over such newcomers he had no sort of authority. One season at Fontainebleau, a room, which had formerly been occupied by a party of the Cent-Suisses, was given up entirely to the new

corps. The room was in a public passage of communication to all in the château, and, in consequence, excellently well adapted for watching those who passed through it. Courtenvaux, more than ever vexed by this new arrangement, regarded it as a fresh encroachment upon his authority, flew into a violent rage with the newcomers, and railed at them in good set terms. They allowed him to fume as he would; they had their orders, and were too wise to be disturbed by his rage. The king, who heard of all this, sent at once for Courtenvaux. As soon as he appeared in the cabinet, the king, without giving him time to approach, called to him from the other end of the room, in a rage so terrible, and for him so novel, that not only Courtenvaux, but the princes and princesses and everybody in the cabinet, trembled. Menaces that his post should be taken away from him, terms the most severe and the most unusual, rained upon Courtenvaux, who, fainting with fright and ready to sink under the ground, had neither the time nor the means to prefer a word. The reprimand finished by the king's saying, 'Get out!' He had scarcely the strength to obey. The cause of this strange scene was that Courtenvaux, by the fuss he had made, had drawn the attention of the whole court to the change effected by the king, and that, when once seen, its object was clear to all eyes. The king, who hid his spy system with the greatest care, had counted upon this change passing unperceived, and was beside himself with anger when he found it made apparent to everybody by Courtenvaux's noise. He never regained the king's favor during the rest of his life; and but for his family he would certainly have been driven away and his office taken from him." The spy system was undoubtedly useful to the king, but unworthy of him. It was mean and petty. He must have felt it to be so, and was incensed and mortified to have it brought to light. But these cases of loss of temper are, after all, small things in contrast

to Louis's daily courtesy, majesty, and tact, exercised on countless occasions through so many years; and in each case, when his wrath had cooled, the king was not revengeful. Louvois was not dismissed or imprisoned, Courtenvaux was spared on account of his family, the valets were not discharged, the pickpocket was not hanged. If the Grand Monarch had had no worse faults than these flashes of temper, he would have been what some of his flatterers were pleased to dub him, "the marvel of his age."

Examples of the king's control of temper, his tact and courtesy, abound. Saint-Simon's story of Lauzun's quarrel with Louis is perhaps the best known. How the king had promised Lauzun the post of grand master of artillery; how Louvois and Madame de Montespan used their influence to prevent this favor; and how the hot-headed and audacious Gascon demanded an audience with Louis, turned his back on the monarch, snapped the blade of his sword, and cried out that he would never again serve a king who had so shamefully broken his word, while Louis, though transported with anger, said he should be sorry to strike a man of quality, tossed his cane out of the window, and left the room,—all that, Saint-Simon has told in his own matchless way. But the Grand Monarch would probably have been much surprised, had he been able to read the account of this episode, to find that in M. de Saint-Simon's opinion he had performed "the finest action of his life." It was a good example of control of temper, nothing more, and the fact that it became in Saint-Simon's eyes "the finest action" was because Lauzun was a duke, and Saint-Simon was a duke, and the latter was rabid on the subject of ducal rank.

Though Louis would not overlook criticism on his methods of government, he was more amenable in other matters. For example, there was Villiers, a follower of the Duc de Vendôme. He condemned the king's taste in music, painting,

architecture, and gardens. If the king planted a grove, put up a fountain, furnished an apartment, Villiers pronounced it all wrong and expressed himself loudly. "It is strange," said Louis, "that Villiers has chosen my palace to come to in order to find fault with all I do." Meeting him one day in the gardens of Versailles, the king pointed out one of his recent improvements, saying, "This, then, has not the good fortune to please you?" "No," replied Villiers. "And yet," said the king, "there are many people who are not so discontented with it." "That may be," replied Villiers. "Each to his own mind." "One cannot please everybody," answered the king, laughing. On a par with this is that answer made by Louis to Despréaux, who had condemned some verses which His Majesty had approved. "Tell the king," cried Despréaux, publicly, "that I am a better judge of verse than he." "He is right," said Louis. "He is a better judge than I." But it should be borne in mind that neither the criticisms of Villiers, nor of Despréaux, concerned the king's government or affected his power; had they done that he would not have endured them.

"If the king heard that any one had spoken ill of him," says the Palatine, "he displayed a proud resentment toward the offender; otherwise it was impossible to be more polite and affable than he was. His conversation was pleasing in a high degree. He had the skill of giving an agreeable turn to everything. His manner of talking was natural, without the least affectation, amiable and obliging."[1] This charm of manner, joined to so much majesty and grace, called forth the encomiums of the courtiers, and not all of their praises were flattery. Louis was fond of flattery, too fond, though he was not as greedy of it as he is commonly supposed to have been, and at times he was ready to ridicule it; but in this connection it should never be forgotten that the king con-

[1] Memoirs of Elizabeth-Charlotte, Duchesse d'Orléans, p. 46.

tinually said complimentary or flattering things to others, and they were naturally quick to pay him back in his own coin. He had, too, in a high degree the great gift of tact. "He understood perfectly the art of satisfying people even while he reproved their requests. His manners were most affable, and he spoke with so much politeness as to win all hearts." [1] In the *Memoirs* of Madame de Montespan there is an instance of Louis's tact at the reception of the Doge of Genoa: "When the Doge had asked for pardon, as he had submitted to do, two of his senators fell to weeping. The king, who noticed the general emotion, descended from his throne and spoke for some minutes with the five personages, smiling on them with his most seductive grace, and once more drew all hearts to himself." [2] Under the circumstances this was sufficiently striking, but unfortunately there is no mention of it in the official account of the ceremony, and the genuineness of the *Memoirs* of Madame de Montespan has been questioned. But another example, about the authenticity of which there is no doubt, is given by the Palatine: "Upon my arrival at St. Germain I felt as if I had fallen from the clouds. I saw very well that I did not please my husband much, and indeed that could not be wondered at, considering my ugliness; however, I resolved to conduct myself in such a manner toward Monsieur that he should become accustomed to me by my attentions, and eventually should be able to endure me. Immediately upon my arrival, the king came to see me at the Château Neuf, where Monsieur and I lived; he brought with him the dauphin, who was then a child of about ten years old. As soon as I had finished my toilet the king returned to the Old Château, where he received me in the Guards' hall, and led me to the queen, whispering at the same time, 'Do not be frightened, madame; she will

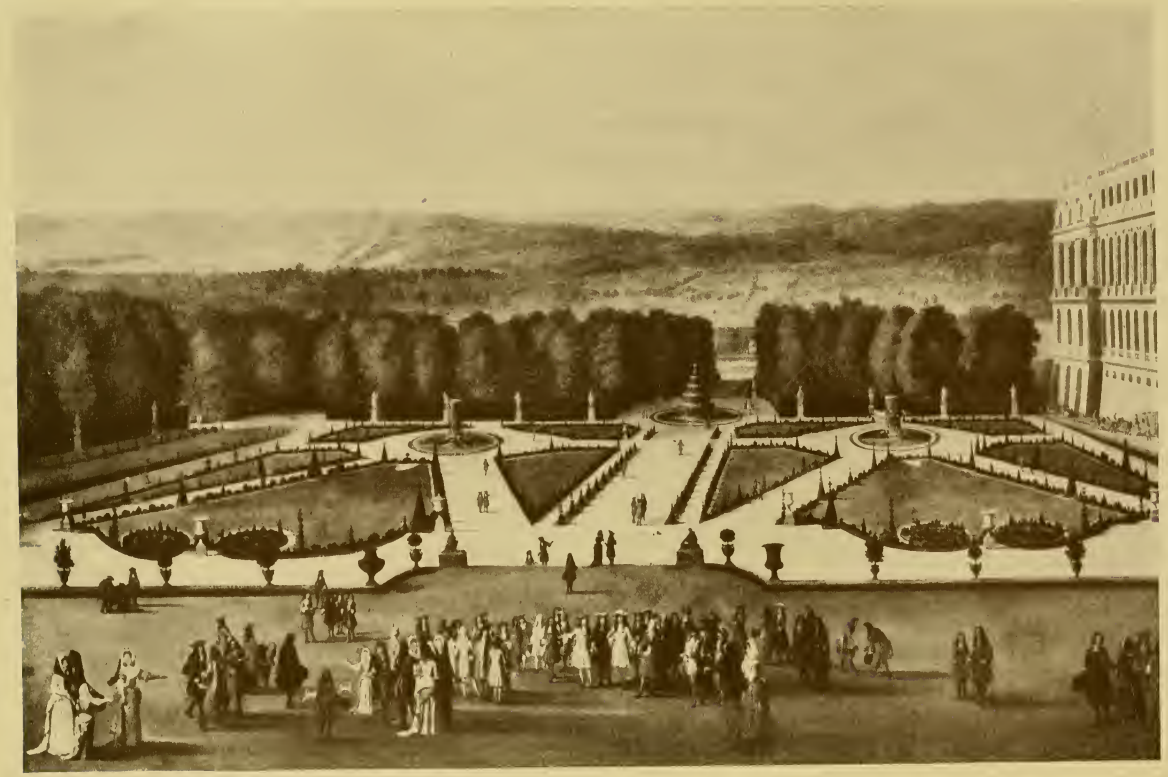
[1] Memoirs of Elizabeth-Charlotte, Duchesse d'Orléans, p. 68.
[2] Memoirs of Madame de Montespan, II, p. 308.

be more afraid of you than you of her.' The king felt so much the embarrassment of my situation that he would not quit me; he sat by my side, and whenever it was necessary for me to rise, that is to say, whenever a prince or a duke entered the apartment, he gave me a gentle push in the side without being perceived." On one occasion at least Louis used his tact to replenish his treasury. "It was on the 7th of May, 1708," says Saint-Simon, "and at Marly. The king, walking round the gardens, showing them to Bergheyck, and talking with him upon the approaching campaign in Flanders, stopped before one of the pavilions. It was that occupied by Desmarets, who had recently succeeded Chamillart in the direction of the finances, and who was at work within with Samuel Bernard, the famous banker, the richest man in Europe, and whose money dealings were the largest. The king observed to Desmarets that he was very glad to see him with M. Bernard, and then immediately said to the latter: 'You are just the man never to have seen Marly—come and see it now; I will give you up afterward to Desmarets.' Bernard followed, and while the walk lasted the king spoke only to Bergheyck and to Bernard, leading them everywhere, and showing them everything with the grace he knew so well how to employ when he desired to overwhelm. I marveled, and I was not the only one, at this species of prostitution of the king, so niggard of his words, to a man of Bernard's degree. I was not long in learning the cause of it, and I admired to see how the greatest kings sometimes find themselves reduced. Our finances just then were exhausted. Desmarets no longer knew of what wood to make a crutch. He had been to Paris, knocking at every door; but the most exact engagements had been so often broken that he found nothing but excuses and closed doors. Bernard, like the rest, would advance nothing; much was due him. In vain Desmarets represented to him the pressing necessity for money,

and the enormous gains he had made out of the king. Bernard remained unshakable. The king and the minister were cruelly embarrassed. Desmarets said to the king that, after all was said and done, only Samuel Bernard could draw them out of the mess, because it was not doubtful that he had plenty of money everywhere; that the only thing needed was to vanquish his determination and the obstinacy, even insolence, he had shown; that he was a man crazy with vanity, and capable of opening his purse if the king deigned to flatter him. It was agreed, therefore, that Desmarets should invite Bernard to dinner, and that the king should come and disturb them as I have related. Bernard was the dupe of this scheme; he returned from his walk with the king enchanted to such an extent that he said he would prefer ruining himself rather than leave in embarrassment a monarch who had just treated him so graciously and whose eulogiums he uttered with enthusiasm." [1]

Louis's poise was perfect and proof against surprise. Of this Saint-Simon gives a striking example: "The grand apartments at Versailles, that is to say from the gallery to the tribune of the chapel, were hung with crimson velvet, trimmed and fringed with gold. One fine morning all the fringe and trimmings were found to have been cut away. This appeared extraordinary in a place so frequented all day, so well closed at night, and so well guarded at all times. Bontemps, the king's valet, was in despair, and did his utmost to discover the thieves, but without success. Five or six days afterward, I was at the king's supper, with nobody but Daquin, chief physician, between the king and me, and nobody at all between me and the table. Suddenly I perceived a large black form in the air, but before I could tell what it was, it fell upon the end of the king's table just in front of the cover which had been laid for Monseigneur

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 16.



Louis XIV in the Gardens of Versailles

and Madame. By the noise it made in falling, and the weight of the thing itself, it seemed as though the table must be broken. The plates jumped up, but none were upset, and the thing, as luck would have it, did not fall upon any of them, but simply upon the cloth. The king turned his head half round, and without being moved in any way said, 'I think that is my fringe!' It was indeed a bundle, larger than a priest's flat-brimmed hat, about two feet in height, and shaped like a pyramid. It had come from behind me, from the middle door of the two antechambers, and a piece of fringe getting loose in the air had fallen upon the king's wig, from which it was removed by Livry, a gentleman in waiting. Livry also opened the bundle, and saw that it did indeed contain the fringes all twisted up, and everybody saw likewise. A murmur was heard. Livry, wishing to take away the bundle, found a paper attached to it. He took the paper and left the bundle. The king stretched out his hand and said, 'Let us see.' Livry, and with reason, would not give up the paper, but stepped back, read it, and then passed it to Daquin, in whose hands I read it. The writing, counterfeited and long like that of a woman, was in these words: 'Take back your fringes, Bontemps; they are not worth the trouble of keeping. My compliments to the king.' The paper was rolled up, not folded; the king wished to take it from Daquin, who, after much hesitation, allowed him to read it, but did not let it out of his hands. 'Well, that is very insolent!' said the king, but in quite a placid, unmoved tone—as it were, an historical tone. Afterward he ordered the bundle to be taken away. Livry found it so heavy that he could scarcely lift it from the table, and gave it to an attendant who presented himself. The king spoke no more of this matter, nobody else dared to do so; and the supper finished as though nothing had happened. Besides the excess of insolence and impudence of this act, it was so perilous as

to be scarcely understood. How could any one, without being seconded by accomplices, throw a bundle of this weight and volume in the midst of a crowd such as was always present at the supper of the king, so dense that it could with difficulty be passed through? How, in spite of a circle of accomplices, could a movement of the arms necessary for such a throw escape all eyes? The Duc de Gesvres was in waiting. Neither he nor anybody else thought of closing the doors until the king had left the table. It may be guessed whether the guilty parties remained until then, having had more than three quarters of an hour to escape, and every issue being free. Only one person was discovered, who was not known, but he proved to be a very honest man, and was dismissed after a short detention. Nothing has since been discovered respecting this theft or its bold restitution." [1] Throughout this episode Louis's attitude was admirable. With his quickness of perception he grasped at once the meaning of the crash and the mysterious cause of it. No person but the one who had been bold enough to steal his fringes would dare to insult him in such fashion, and he answered the stares of his courtiers by calmly solving the enigma, "I think that is my fringe!" The mockery contained in the note he met with unruffled majesty, and his grip on those about him was so strong that not one of them dared to discuss the matter in his presence. The king's poise, in small affairs or great, was well calculated to awe a people as nervous and excitable as the French.

Majesty, courtesy, grace, and tact were, therefore, Louis's chief virtues. In those traits of character he surpassed all the kings Europe had seen; he stood alone and unrivaled. But in a lesser degree, and with limitations, he had other virtues. "He was always kind and generous," says the Palatine, "when he acted from his own impulses." Even Saint-

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 140.

Simon, bitter as he is, bears the same testimony: "He loved glory; was fond of order and regularity; was by disposition prudent, moderate, discreet, master of his movements and of his tongue. Will it be believed? He was also by disposition good and just! God had sufficiently gifted him to enable him to be a good king, perhaps even a tolerably great king. All the evil came to him from elsewhere." To kindness, generosity, and a sense of justice must be added courage, perseverance, and reticence. In short, the king had many good and some great qualities.

His faults were due chiefly to his defective education and to his theories; the former made him, when he became devout, a bigot, and the latter almost ruined France financially. "It is impossible for a man to be more ignorant of religion than the king was," says the Palatine. "I cannot understand how his mother could have brought him up with so little knowledge on this subject. He believed all the priests said to him, as if it came from God Himself. Old Maintenon and Père La Chaise had persuaded him that all the sins he had committed with Madame de Montespan would be pardoned if he extirpated the followers of the reformed religion, and that this was the only path to heaven. The poor king believed it fervently, for he had never read a Bible in his life; and immediately after this the persecution commenced. He knew no more of religion than what his confessors chose to tell him, and they made him believe that it was not lawful to investigate in matters of religion, but that reason should be prostrated in order to gain heaven. The king, however, was earnest enough himself, and it was not his fault that hypocrisy reigned at court. Old Maintenon had forced people to assume it." The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was the great mistake of the Grand Monarch. To quote a famous phrase, "it was worse than a crime; it was a blunder." Up to the day when he committed that iniquity Louis had led the

vanguard of European civilization; then he fell back a century. Yet his Catholic subjects must share the odium with him, for they forced his hand. In his *Memoirs,* written in 1670, Louis expresses himself as follows: "I believed that the best means, in order to reduce the Huguenots of my kingdom by degrees, was in the first place not to constrain them at all by any new rigor, to cause that to be observed toward them that they had obtained from my predecessors, but to accord them nothing beyond this, and even to confine its execution within the narrowest limits which justice and propriety could permit. As to the favors which depended on me alone, I resolved, and I have since observed this somewhat strictly, to grant them none." In other words, places and pensions were to be for Catholics alone, a narrow-minded policy, which, however, was all that could reasonably be expected at that time and with the temper of France. Persecution the king distinctly condemned. "Those who wished to employ violent remedies," he continues, "did not know the nature of this evil, caused in part by the warmth of minds, which must be left to pass away and to die out insensibly, instead of exciting it anew by such strong contradictions, always useless, moreover, when the evil is not confined to a certain number, but diffused throughout the state." [1] That was Louis's attitude up to 1685, and doubtless he would have maintained it but for Madame de Maintenon and the Jesuits. The second wife of the Grand Monarch probably helped to save his soul, but she undoubtedly helped to ruin his kingdom.

But pitiful as he was in matters of religion, where his "reason was prostrated in order to gain heaven," Louis had naturally a strong mind, sound judgment, and good taste, and in other directions, in spite of his defective education, he made great strides. Thanks to the patronage of the king,

[1] Œuvres de Louis XIV, I, p. 84.

Versailles became not only the rallying-point for the nobility, but the rendezvous for artists and men of letters. What a galaxy fortune enabled Louis to assemble!—Molière, Corneille, Racine, Boileau, La Fontaine, Lebrun, Girardon, Claude Lorrain, Le Nôtre, Massillon, Bossuet, Fénelon, Bourdaloue. They have done more for his fame than his ministers or his marshals; they have outlived him and his monarchy; they are to-day the only stars in his crown. In spite of the hue and cry raised against Molière, the king supported him steadily, and whether the anecdote told by Madame Campan, on doubtful authority, of Molière's breakfasting with Louis at his *lever,* be true or false, it is certainly true that when Pierre Roullès produced a book against Molière and *Tartuffe,* in which the former was referred to as "a demon, the most signal infidel that has ever existed," and the latter as "an impious, abominable, and diabolical piece," His Majesty, far from relishing the flattery of the dedication, "To Louis XIV, the most glorious King of the World," promptly had the edition suppressed. In his best years, the king's benefactions to literary men and artists did not stop at the frontiers of France. "His ambassadors had orders to seek out the men in all countries whose labors merited the public esteem; some were attracted to France by the offer of honorable and advantageous positions; others received gratuities and pensions, accompanied by most flattering letters from the hand of Colbert, without other conditions than the tacit obligation of loudly expressing their gratitude. The effect of this liberality which sought out merit throughout Europe, without distinction of nationality, and which made the King of France the protector of the republic of letters, was immense, and out of all proportion to the material expense." [1] Such a step on the part of a man whose early education had been so much neglected that he had been taught little beyond

[1] Henri Martin, History of France, I, p. 144.

reading and writing leads one to the conclusion of the Palatine, "It is almost a miracle that the king should have become what he afterward was."

But the point at which Louis seems to the modern mind most difficult to comprehend, nay, more, fantastic and absurd, is in his mental attitude toward himself and his mission. How great is the gulf which separates the seventeenth century from the twentieth! "Royal authority," says Bossuet, "is absolute. The king should render an account to no one for what he prescribes. Kings are gods, according to the language of the Scriptures, and participate in some manner in divine independence. Against the authority of the king there can be no remedy except in his authority. There is no coactive force against the king. . . . It is not justifiable to rise against kings for any cause whatsoever. To speak against the king is a cause worthy of the greatest punishment, and this crime is treated as almost equal to that of blasphemy against God." [1] Upon this doctrine Louis was brought up, and in him it reached its logical fulfilment. By it he ruled, for neither philosophy nor science had as yet placed in the minds of his subjects a doubt to say him nay. "France is a monarchical state in the full extent of the expression," says Louis. "The king represents therein the entire nation, and each private individual represents only a single individual toward the king. Consequently all power, all authority, resides in the hands of the king, and there can be no other in his kingdom than that which he establishes. The nation does not form a body in France. It resides entire in the person of the king." [2] One should not make the mistake of supposing that this expression of the powers inherent in royalty was merely the personal opinion of the King of France. It was the belief of millions of his subjects, probably not to the full extent

[1] Œuvres de Bossuet, IV, V, VI.

[2] Œuvres de Louis XIV, II, p. 93.

of Louis's conception, but in a degree sufficient to give that conception a living force. But Louis's idea of absolute monarchy did not stop there; he denied the right of individual property. "Everything that is found in the extent of our states, of whatsoever nature it may be, belongs to us by the same right. The moneys which are in our coffers, those which remain in the hands of our treasurers, and those which we leave in the commerce of our people, should be alike managed by us. Kings are absolute lords, and have naturally the full and free disposal of all the goods possessed as well by churchmen as by laymen, to use them at all times, according to the general need of their state." [1] Before such a monstrous principle one stands aghast. In the face of this, the $100,000,000 spent by the Grand Monarch in creating Versailles seems insignificant. This startling assumption of the royal ownership of all property was, again, not merely the king's private opinion, but was backed up by the Sorbonne. "The king related to Maréchal," says Saint-Simon, "that the extremity of his affairs (1710) had forced him to put on furious imposts; that setting aside compassion, scruples had much tormented him for taking thus the wealth of his subjects; that at last he had unbosomed himself to Père Tellier, who had asked for a few days to think upon the matter, and that he had returned after having had a consultation with some of the most skilful doctors of the Sorbonne, who had decided that all the wealth of his subjects was the king's, and that when he took it he only took what belonged to him." [2] While Colbert lived, while the resources of France were developed, while money abounded and the state flourished, this principle was more a theory than a law; but when, in the bad years of the War of the Spanish Succession, Louis made use of it, in a death-struggle with Eu-

[1] Œuvres de Louis XIV, II, p. 121.
[2] Saint-Simon, II, p. 161.

rope, his subjects accepted it in so far only as they paid the taxes, without ceasing to cry out. "On my arrival at Marly (1709)," says Saint-Simon, "I found everything in trouble there; the king so chagrined that he could not hide it, although usually master of himself and of his face; the court believing that some new disaster had happened which would unwillingly be declared. Four or five days passed in this way; at last it became known what was in the wind. The king, informed that Paris and all the public were murmuring loudly about the expenses of Marly, at a time when it was impossible to meet the most indispensable claims of a necessary and unfortunate war, was more annoyed this time than on any other occasion, although he had often received the same warnings. Madame de Maintenon had the greatest difficulty to hinder him from returning straight to Versailles. The upshot was that the king declared with a sort of bitter joy that he would no longer feed the ladies at Marly; that for the future he would dine alone, simply, as at Versailles; that he would sup every day at a table for sixteen with his family. He added bitterly that by making retrenchments at Marly, he should not spend more there than at Versailles, so that he could go there when he pleased without being exposed to the blame of any one. He deceived himself from one end of this business to the other. The truth is that no change was made at Marly except in name. The king's subjects did not cease to complain."

Louis was not a soldier. He was brave enough, he was an admirable organizer, and, seconded by Louvois, he made his army the most efficient in Europe; but in spite of the fact that he crossed the Rhine and entered triumphantly into conquered cities, or directed military operations from his cabinet at Versailles, his pose as a great captain strikes a false note. He owed the success of his spectacular sieges to Vauban, and the best opportunity he ever had of winning

Jacques Bénigne Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux

a pitched battle he threw away. "We were in this position," says Saint-Simon, "with an army in every way infinitely superior to that of the Prince of Orange, and with four whole months before us to profit by our strength, when the king declared on the 8th of June (1693) that he should return to Versailles, and sent off a large detachment of the army into Germany. The surprise of the Maréchal de Luxembourg was without bounds. He represented the facility with which the Prince of Orange might now be beaten with one army and pursued by another; and how important it was to draw off detachments of the Imperial forces from Germany into Flanders, and how, by sending an army into Flanders instead of Germany, the whole of the Low Countries would be in our power. But the king would not change his plans, although M. de Luxembourg went down on his knees, and begged him not to allow such a glorious opportunity to escape. Madame de Maintenon, by her tears when she parted from His Majesty, and by her letters since, had brought about this resolution."[1] It is the business of a soldier to destroy the enemy.

When Père La Chaise died, the news was brought to the king as he came out of his cabinet. "He received it," says Saint-Simon, "like a prince accustomed to losses, praised Père La Chaise for his goodness, and then said smilingly, and quite aloud, before all the courtiers, to the two priests who had come to announce the death: 'He was so good that I sometimes reproached him for it, and he used to reply to me, "It is not I who am good; it is you who are hard."' The priests and all the courtiers were so surprised at this that they lowered their eyes. The remark spread directly; nobody was able to blame Père La Chaise." This anecdote implies another phase of the king's character, hardness, or, in other words, pride. The Grand Monarch was not natu-

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 31.

rally hard of heart, but he was one of the proudest men of whom history makes mention, and on the subject of his pride he has received a vast amount of criticism. It is an open question if much of that criticism is not misplaced. Louis was not a philanthropist, nor a philosopher, nor a financier, nor a builder of better lodgings for workingmen; he was a king, according to his lights, and in his judgment, to be a king, was to rise and shine. "The business of a king," he says in his *Memoirs,* "is great, noble, and gratifying, when one feels capable of worthily fulfilling all the obligations it involves, but it is not exempt from trouble, fatigue, and disquiet. Uncertainty is sometimes most distressing, and when reasonable time has been passed in examination of a matter, a resolution must be taken, and the line one believes to be the best, followed. While keeping the state in view, one works for oneself; the good of the one makes the glory of the other. When the former is prosperous, exalted, and powerful, he who is the cause of this may be proud, and enjoy all that is most agreeable in life more fully than his subjects on his own account and theirs. When one has made mistakes, the fault should be repaired as soon as possible, and no consideration, not even that of kindness, be allowed to prevent this." That was his attitude, and since in the first half of his reign he had made France "prosperous, exalted, and powerful," he was proud, and his subjects were proud of him. We know to-day that his principles were false, but in the face of the defeats and misfortunes of his later years he followed those principles with a constancy and a courage that make criticism unjust and ridicule impossible. When his fortunes were most desperate, owing to the terrible defeats his forces had suffered at the hands of Marlborough and Prince Eugene, and when his private griefs were most bitter, due to the sudden deaths of the Duchesse de Bourgogne, the Duc de Bourgogne, and their son, the Duc de

Bretagne, the old king displayed a pride and a courage truly admirable. Villars has left an account of the memorable interview he had with Louis on the 16th of April, 1712, before he set out to command the army in Flanders: "The first time that I had the honor of seeing the king at Marly after these sad events, the firmness of the monarch gave way to the grief of the man. He wept, and said to me in a tone which moved me, 'You see my state, Monsieur le Maréchal. There are few examples of such misfortune as has happened to me, since I have lost in less than a month my grandson, my granddaughter-in-law, and their son, all of the greatest promise, all most tenderly loved. God has punished me. I have deserved it. I shall suffer less in another world. But let us lay aside my domestic misfortunes and see what can be done to prevent those which threaten the kingdom. The confidence I have in you is great, since I place in your hands the forces and the safety of the state. I know the reasoning of the courtiers. They wish me to retire to Blois and not to wait until the army of the enemy approaches Paris. But if a disaster should happen to the army which you command, I will go to St. Quentin, collect there all the troops I have, make a last effort with you, and perish with you, or save the state. Never will I suffer the enemy to approach my capital.'" With these words ringing in his ears, Villars set out, won the battle of Denain, and saved France.

Louis, as has been said, was not naturally hard of heart, but his beliefs, his aims, and his environment made him self-centered and self-absorbed. Saint-Simon gives an example of this, all the more striking since it concerns a person to whom the king was sincerely devoted: "The Duchesse de Bourgogne, being in the family way this spring (1708), was much inconvenienced. The king wished to go to Fontainebleau at the commencement of the fine season, contrary to his usual custom, and had declared this wish. In the mean-

time he desired to pay visits to Marly. Madame de Bourgogne much amused him; he could not do without her, and yet so much movement was not suitable to her state. Madame de Maintenon was uneasy, and Fagon gently intimated his opinion. This annoyed the king, accustomed to restrain himself for nothing, and spoiled in the past by having seen his mistresses travel when pregnant, or when just recovering from their confinement, and always in full dress. The hints against going to Marly bothered him, but did not make him give up going. All he would consent to was that the journey should be put off from the day after Quasimodo to the Wednesday of the following week; but nothing could make him delay his journey beyond that time, or induce him to allow Madame de Bourgogne to remain at Versailles. On the following Saturday, as the king was taking a walk at Marly after mass, and amusing himself at the carp-basin between the château and the Perspective,[1] we saw the Duchesse de Lude coming toward him on foot and all alone, which, as no lady was with the king in the morning, was a rarity. We understood that she had something important to say to him, and when he was a short distance from her, we stopped so as to allow him to join her alone. The interview was not long. She went away again, and the king came back toward us, and near the carp-basin, without saying a word. Each saw clearly what was in the wind, and nobody was eager to speak. At last the king, when quite close to the basin, looked at the principal people around, and, without addressing anybody, said, with an air of vexation, these few words, 'The Duchesse de Bourgogne is hurt.' M. de la Rochefoucauld[2] at once uttered an exclamation. M. de Bouillon, the Duc de Tresmes, and the Maréchal de Boufflers repeated in a low tone the words I have named;

[1] The pavilion behind which were the lodgings of the servants.
[2] The grand huntsman of France.

and M. de la Rochefoucauld, returning to the charge, declared emphatically that it was the greatest misfortune in the world, and that, as she had already wounded herself on other occasions, she might never, perhaps, have any more children. 'And if so,' interrupted the king all on a sudden, with anger, 'what is that to me? Has she not already a son; and if he should die, is not the Duc de Berry old enough to marry and have one? What matters it to me who succeeds me, the one or the other? Are they not all equally my grandchildren?' And immediately, with impetuosity, he added: 'Thank God she is wounded, since she was to be so; and I shall no longer be annoyed in my journeys and in everything I wish to do by the representations of doctors, and the reasonings of matrons. I shall go and come at my pleasure, and shall be left in peace.' A silence so deep that an ant might be heard to walk succeeded this strange outburst. All eyes were lowered; people scarcely dared to breathe. All remained stupefied. Even the domestics and the gardeners stood motionless. This silence lasted more than a quarter of an hour. The king broke it as he leaned upon a balustrade to speak of a carp. Nobody replied. He addressed himself afterward on the subject of these carps to the valets, who did not ordinarily join in the conversation. Nothing but carps was spoken of with them. All was languishing, and the king went away some time after. As soon as we dared look at each other out of his sight, our eyes met and told all. Everybody there, was, for the moment, the confidant of his neighbor. We admired, we marveled, we grieved, we shrugged our shoulders. However distant may be that scene, it is always equally present to me. M. de la Rochefoucauld was in a fury, and this time without being wrong. The chief equerry was ready to faint with affright. I myself examined everybody with my eyes and ears, and was satisfied with myself for having long

since thought that the king loved and cared for himself alone, and was himself his only object in life. This strange discourse sounded far and wide, much beyond Marly." [1] Madame de Maintenon, who knew better than anybody else this phase of the king's character, has left on record, in a letter to Madame de Glapion, some lines which explain it perfectly: "Great people, as a rule, never constrain themselves. They never think that others are constrained by them, nor do they feel grateful for it; simply because they are so accustomed to see everything done in reference to themselves that they are no longer struck by it, and pay no heed."

Little has been said here of the king's mistresses. Mlle. de la Vallière, Madame de Montespan, Mlle. de Fontanges, and Madame de Soubise belong to an earlier period. From 1682, when Versailles became the seat of government, and what was properly the court of Versailles began, Louis had no mistresses. For two or three years the courtiers were disposed to consider Madame de Maintenon in that light, but they discovered their error. "The king," says the Palatine, "gave great scandal on account of his mistresses; but then he very sincerely repented of these offenses." During the last thirty-three years of his life the Grand Monarch set an example of clean living and piety, and it would be both unjust and inaccurate to drag the scandals of his young manhood into his old age.

Such were some of the lights and shadows in the character of the most powerful and popular of the Bourbon kings; for, in spite of his errors, Louis was popular during the greater part of his long reign, and his strength lay in the fact that he was thoroughly French, and that his aims and ambitions were those of the large majority of his subjects. Wearied by the disorders of the Fronde, they had no wish to try constitutional experiments; they longed for

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 15.

a strong government, glory, territory, and prestige, and Louis gave them what they craved. Up to 1690 at least, he was the personification of their ambitions and their hopes, and in that sense he could have uttered truly the famous phrase, which will always cling to him despite the doubt as to its authenticity, *L'État, c'est moi.* In the bitter years of the War of the Spanish Succession his popularity and his financial system were strained to the breaking-point; and when, out of his furious struggle with Europe, he emerged, bleeding but still erect, uncrushed and unconquered, he had only two years to draw breath before he died.

The world has failed to confirm the title, conferred on him by the city of Paris, Louis the Great; for though in him there were elements of greatness, he was too tightly bound by the trammels of etiquette, too closely hedged about by his divine right, to become a really great man. But the title, Grand Monarch, which sprang spontaneously to the lips of his contemporaries, is rightfully his, for he won it himself by his majesty and bearing, by his courtesy and grace, by the dignity with which he ruled his court, by his continuous labor, by his unvarying punctuality, by his steadfast faith in the lofty origin of his office, and by his consistent endeavor to live up to his conception of his duties and responsibilities.

THE SUN KING

Louis was an idealist, and Versailles was more than the dwelling of a King of France. On the ceiling of its sumptuous Galerie des Glaces was a Sun King, young, victorious, and crowned with laurel, whom all the Arts united to celebrate, who had dethroned Jupiter, and had created, on the glittering arches of Versailles, a new Olympus in which all the gods and goddesses of mythology swelled his triumph train. Out under the blue sky he drove his four-horse chariot

amid the leaping waters,[1] and the gilded device[2] of his divinity blazed on the railings that hedged his royal house. He was always young, he was always victorious, he was always crowned with laurel, he was always superb. Each day he rose and set with the same splendor, and in transit he gave light and life to all the world. He was Louis's ideal, and toward him Louis unceasingly strove, hampered by the financial difficulties of an earthly existence.

"Sire," wrote Colbert in 1675, "I entreat Your Majesty to permit me to tell you that neither in war nor in peace have you ever consulted your finances to determine your expenditures, which are so extraordinary that they are certainly without example; and, if you will be pleased to examine and compare the times and years, during the last twenty-five years that I have had the honor of serving you, you will find that, although the receipts have greatly increased, the expenditures have far exceeded the receipts, and perhaps this will persuade Your Majesty to moderate and curtail what is excessive, and by this means to put a little more proportion between the receipts and the expenditures." To this Louis answered, "The king gives alms in spending largely." It was the Sun King who replied. The business of a Sun King was not to balance receipts and expenditures. A Sun King dazzled, or he did nothing.

From 1670 to 1685, with a magnificent disregard of receipts and expenditures, Louis neared his goal. He was young and victorious and crowned with laurel. He rose and set each day with the same splendor, and in transit he gave, in his opinion, light and life to all the world. "All was flourishing then in the state," says Saint-Simon. "Riches everywhere. Colbert had placed the finances, the navy, com-

[1] The basin of Apollo.

[2] Louis took the sun for his device in 1656, at a fête given at the Palais Royal. The legend *Nec pluribus impar* was invented for him at the time of the tournament on the Place du Carrousel in 1662.

The Basin of Apollo

merce, manufactures, letters even, upon the highest point; and this age, like that of Augustus, produced in abundance illustrious men of all kinds, even those illustrious only in pleasures." In the *Mercure* may be found an account of the reception of the Doge of Genoa at Versailles on the 15th of May, 1685: "When the doge and the senators had ascended the magnificent staircase leading to the grand apartments of His Majesty, they entered the salon of War, and turned from that into the grand gallery, at the other end of which was the king on his throne in the salon of Peace. . . . All the apartments and the gallery were magnificently furnished with silver furniture, worth many million livres. The crowd was so great that, in spite of the efforts made to keep a passage free, the doge had much difficulty in crossing the gallery. M. le Maréchal Duc de Duras conducted him to the foot of His Majesty's throne. It was made of silver." When Louis received the ambassadors of Siam in 1686, the Marquis de Sourches describes the king's costume as follows: "He wore a habit of cloth of gold, laced with large diamonds." [1] Madame de Montespan is in accord: "When His Majesty appeared on his throne, the fire of the diamonds with which he was covered for a moment dazzled all eyes." [2] "As for the king himself," declares Saint-Simon, "nobody ever approached his magnificence." [3]

But France was not rich enough to support a Sun King's splendor and wage war at the same time. "The king," says Dangeau, under date of 1689, "has decided that people must send to the mint all their silver furniture, tables, mirrors, vases, etc., and to set the example himself he has had melted up all his beautiful silver furniture, in spite of the richness of the workmanship." Things went from bad

[1] Memoirs, II, p. 161
[2] Memoirs of Madame de Montespan, II, p. 307.
[3] Saint-Simon, II, p. 369.

to worse, until in the War of the Spanish Succession the Sun King disappeared in the battle-smoke of Blenheim, leaving the King of France to struggle with misfortune. "The want of money indeed made itself felt so much at this time (1707)," says Saint-Simon, "that the king was obliged to seek for resources as a private person might have done. . . . The difficulty of finding money to carry on the affairs of the nation continued to grow so irksome that Chamillart, who had both the finance and war departments under his control, was unable to stand against the increased trouble and vexation which this state of things brought to him. More than once he had represented that this double work was too much for him. But the king had in former times expressed so much annoyance from the troubles that arose between the finance and war departments that he would not separate them after having once joined them together. At last Chamillart could bear up under his heavy load no longer. The vapors seized him; he had attacks of giddiness in the head; his digestion was obstructed; he grew thin as a lath. He wrote again to the king, begging to be released from his duties, and stating frankly that, in the state he was, if some relief was not afforded him, everything would go wrong and perish. He always left a large margin to his letters, and upon this the king generally wrote his reply. Chamillart showed me this letter when it came back to him, and I saw upon it with great surprise, in the handwriting of the king, this short note: 'Well, let us perish together.'"

Did they not perish together, Sun King and King of France, and when the end came in 1715, who but the man alone was left to meet it? "On Saturday evening, the 24th of August, he supped in his dressing-gown, in the presence of the courtiers, for the last time. I noticed that he could only swallow liquids, and that he was troubled if looked at. He could not finish his supper, and begged the courtiers to

pass on, that is to say, go away." [1] And when they had gone, and the doors were shut, leaning on his *valet de chambre,* he tottered for the last time to his crimson couch. Could night recall the vanished dream?

Still, heedless of the centuries, upon the arches of that sumptuous Galerie des Glaces, the Sun King sits serene. Out under the blue sky he drives his four-horse chariot amid the leaping waters, and the gilded device of his divinity still blazes on the railings that hedge his royal house. He is always young, he is always victorious, he is always crowned with laurel, he is always superb. Each day he rises and sets with the same splendor, and in transit he gives light and life to all the world.

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 350.

V

ETIQUETTE

VERSAILLES was a world in which all the nobility revolved, according to their rank, each in his own orbit, like the stars and planets about the sun. Etiquette, invisible and absolute as gravitation, bound all, and an infraction of its laws was the unpardonable sin. Unseen itself, its visible manifestations appeared on all sides and at every moment. It worked noiselessly by signs and wonders. It erected unseen barriers in the center of apartments; it closed doorways by intangible gates of steel; it placed one chair on the right hand and another on the left; it arranged men in lines and half-circles; it assembled them in certain apartments and in certain attitudes; it dismissed them into other apartments and other attitudes; and at all times and in all places it controlled their motions. It filled the atmosphere. Birth and death, love and marriage, pain and pleasure, were regulated by it and were subservient to it. It governed the throne and the altar. The king himself was but its chief custodian and interpreter. A lifetime was hardly sufficient to learn its mysteries. Men were its slaves, and women died for it. It assumed the attributes of Deity.

Louis did not invent that etiquette. There exists a regulation of Henri III, under date of 1585, in which the etiquette of the court is nearly the same as that of Louis XIV; but

Louis gave to it new dignity and precision, new force and power, and on a scale hitherto unknown. To enforce etiquette, Louis himself was compelled to be ruled by etiquette. He ceased to be a free agent, and etiquette became supreme.

Since, then, the king yielded to the higher law, conformed to it, and became its perfect exemplar, all men found it necessary to do the same, according to their abilities, from the princes of the blood down through all ranks and grades of dukes and peers, of gentlemen-servants and *valets de chambre,* to the pack-horse porters of the Kitchen. They moved obedient to the law, for in no other way could their personalities be verified, and the law, working silently by signs and wonders, expressed the exact relation of each star and planet in that solar system to the central sun, and their relations to one another.

Follow the king to the promenade. "For ladies he took his hat off completely, but to a greater or less extent; for titled people half off, holding it in his hand or against his ear some instants, more or less marked; for the nobility he contented himself by putting his hand to his hat." In this instance a spectator, ignorant of the names and rank of those whom the king met, could have discovered their relation to His Majesty by observing carefully the working of the law as expressed by the royal hand and hat.

And as the king, in conformity with the law, expressed daily and hourly the exact relation of each satellite to himself, so they, moving in obedience to the law, expressed their relations to him and to one another. There was a form of salutation for Monseigneur, another for the princes of the blood, another for Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, another for the grand chamberlain, another for the first *valet de chambre* of the king. To salute the grand huntsman of France as one saluted the grand master of the Wardrobe was to infringe the law.

Nothing was too great for the law. Campaigns, receptions of ambassadors, state entries into Paris, fêtes, triumphal tours through provinces, all were regulated by it with supernatural precision. And as nothing was too great for the law, so, also, nothing was too small. At the *lever,* amid the mechanism of the *entrées* of the blood royal, of the great officers of the crown, of the gentlemen of the Chamber, amid the transit of the royal shirt from the grand master to the grand chamberlain, from the grand chamberlain to Monseigneur, and from Monseigneur to Majesty, the law, unerring and invincible, placed the royal garters in the hands of a valet of the Wardrobe, by whom they were presented to the first valet of the Wardrobe, who presented them to the king; in no other way could the personality of the first valet of the Wardrobe be verified.

Observe the harmonious working of the law when a new satellite entered the solar system. "The next evening we went to Versailles," says Saint-Simon (after his marriage), "and were received by Madame de Maintenon and the king. On arriving at the supper-table, the king said to the new duchess, 'Madame, will you be pleased to seat yourself?' His napkin being unfolded, he saw all the duchesses and princesses still standing, and rising in his chair, he said to Madame de Saint-Simon, 'Madame, I have already begged you to be seated'; and all immediately seated themselves." The law, too, like that of the Medes and Persians, was unalterable. "I have seen, at the king's dinner, Monsieur, arriving from St. Cloud, give the king his napkin and remain standing. A little while afterward, the king, seeing that he did not go away, asked him if he would not sit down; he bowed, and the king ordered a seat to be brought for him. A stool was put behind him. Some moments after the king said, 'Nay then, sit down, my brother.' Monsieur bowed and seated himself until the end of the dinner, when he

presented the napkin." In each of these instances, Madame de Saint-Simon and Monsieur remained standing, oblivious of the first request to be seated, until the words, " Madame, I have already begged you to be seated," " Nay then, sit down, my brother," announced the perfect fulfilment of the law.

Observe, too, how easily one could be guilty of an infraction of the law. Madame de Saint-Simon, so completely poised in her orbit at the king's supper, created discord at a reception of ambassadors in the apartments of the Duchesse de Bourgogne by deviating slightly from that orbit: " Madame de Saint-Simon, feeling unwell, and tired of standing, seated herself upon the first cushion she could find. It so happened that in the position she thus occupied she had taken precedence of Madame d'Armagnac by two degrees. Madame d'Armagnac, perceiving it, spoke to her upon the subject. Madame de Saint-Simon, who had only placed herself there for a moment, did not reply, but went elsewhere." Here the discord was slight, since the wandering star, being but two degrees out of her orbit, returned to it at once. But note the frightful discord produced when a star, out of her orbit, crossed the pathway of the sun: " The ladies who were invited to Marly had the privilege of dining with the king. Tables were placed for them, and they took up positions according to their rank. The non-titled ladies had also their special place. It so happened one day that Madame de Torcy, an untitled lady, placed herself above the Duchesse de Duras, who arrived at table a moment after her. Madame de Torcy offered to give up her place, but as it was a little late, the offer passed away in compliments. The king entered, and put himself at table. As soon as he sat down, he saw the place Madame de Torcy had taken, and fixed such a serious and surprised look upon her that she again offered to give up her place to the Duchesse de Duras, but the offer was again declined. All through the

dinner the king scarcely ever took his eyes off Madame de Torcy, said hardly a word, and bore a look of anger that rendered everybody very attentive, and even troubled the Duchesse de Duras. Upon rising from the table, the king passed, according to custom, into the apartments of Madame de Maintenon, followed by the princesses of the blood, who grouped themselves around him upon stools; the others, who entered, kept at a distance. Almost before he had seated himself in his chair, he said to Madame de Maintenon that he had just been witness of an act of 'incredible insolence' (that was the term he used), which had thrown him into such a rage that he had been unable to eat; that such an enterprise would have been insupportable in a woman of the highest quality, but coming, as it did, from a mere bourgeoise, it had so affected him that ten times he had been upon the point of making her leave the table, and that he was only restrained by consideration for her husband. . . . He charged the princesses to tell Madame de Torcy to what extent he had found her conduct impertinent. . . . Torcy was obliged to write him a letter, apologizing for the fault of Madame de Torcy, and at this the king grew content. It may be imagined what a sensation this adventure produced through all the court." [1]

It may easily be imagined, and unless it is imagined, unless one gains some conception of the invincibility and omnipotence of etiquette in the daily life of the court, one cannot understand the courtiers when they bring to the discussion of some trifling point of precedence an earnestness and an energy worthy of a better cause.

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 3.

IV

THE COURT

I

MADAME DE MAINTENON

AFTER the king, the chief personage at Versailles was Madame de Maintenon. In approaching her presence, one almost hesitates to mention the fact that she was formerly known as Madame Scarron, fearing to find oneself in the frightful predicament of Racine. "It happened one evening," says Saint-Simon, "that the king, talking with Racine upon the theater, in the presence of Madame de Maintenon, asked why comedy was so much out of fashion. Racine gave several reasons and concluded by naming the chief, namely, that for want of new pieces the comedians gave old ones, and among others those of Scarron, which were worth nothing and found no favor with anybody. At this the widow blushed, not for the reputation of the cripple attacked, but at hearing his name uttered in the presence of his successor. The king was also embarrassed, and the unhappy Racine, by the silence which followed, felt what a slip he had made. He remained the most confounded of the three, without daring to raise his eyes or to open his mouth. This silence did not terminate for several moments, so heavy and profound was the surprise. The end was that the king sent away Racine, saying that he was going to work. The poet never afterward recovered his position. Neither the king nor Madame de Maintenon ever spoke to him again, or even looked at him."

From this it may be seen that Mme. la Marquise de Main-

tenon had a past. She had also a brother. "Her brother, who was called the Comte d'Aubigné, was of but little worth, and yet always spoke as though no man were his equal, complained that he had not been made Marshal of France, sometimes said that he had taken his baton in money, and constantly bullied Madame de Maintenon because she did not make him a duke and a peer. He spent his time running after girls in the Tuileries, always had several on his hands, and lived and spent his money with their families and friends of the same kidney. He was just fit for a strait-waistcoat, but comical, full of wit and unexpected repartees; a good, humorous fellow, honest and polite, and not too impertinent on account of his sister's fortune. Yet it was a pleasure to hear him talk of the time of Scarron and the Hôtel d'Albret, and of the gallantries and adventures of his sister, which he contrasted with her present position and devotion. He would talk in this manner, not before one or two, but in a compromising manner, quite openly in the Tuileries gardens, or in the galleries of Versailles, before everybody, and would often drolly speak of the king as 'the brother-in-law.' . . . A brother like this was a great annoyance to Madame de Maintenon."

But whatever scandals there may have been in the life of Madame Scarron, there were none in the life of Madame de Maintenon. To the court she was the personification of piety and the touchstone of correctness. Her brother must have been a very great annoyance to her.

The friendship which the Marquise de Montespan formed for her proved to be the foundation of her fortunes. The young Duc du Maine and Mlle. de Nantes, at that time not publicly acknowledged, were confided to her care, and in assuming the post of governess of the royal bastards she was clever enough to insist that the request should come from the father as well as from the mother, that she should hold

the office directly from the king. With the money she received as a recompense for the care and devotion she gave the Duc du Maine, she bought the estate of Maintenon in 1674, paying fifteen thousand livres, and receiving from the king the title of Marquise de Maintenon. But the king disliked her, and she owed the money, estate, and title to the continued solicitations of Madame de Montespan in her behalf. When she was sent to Cauterets with the Duc du Maine, on account of his health, she wrote frequently to Madame de Montespan. Madame de Montespan handed these letters to Louis to read, that he might learn how his son was progressing, and the king found them so well expressed and so interesting and agreeable that he began to regard the Marquise de Maintenon in another light.

"The ill humor of Madame de Montespan," says Saint-Simon, "finished the work. She had a good deal of that quality and had become accustomed to give it full swing. The king was the object of it more frequently than anybody. Madame de Maintenon reproached Madame de Montespan for this, and thus advanced herself in the king's favor. By degrees the king grew accustomed to speak sometimes to Madame de Maintenon, to tell her what he wished her to say to Madame de Montespan, and at last to relate to her the chagrins the latter caused him, and to consult her thereupon. Admitted thus into the intimate confidence of the lover and the mistress, and this by the king's own doing, Madame de Maintenon knew well how to cultivate it, and profited so well by her industry that by degrees she supplanted Madame de Montespan, who perceived, too late, that her friend had become necessary to the king." It was a hard blow for Madame de Montespan. "The king arrived (in the apartments of the dauphine); I then had the pleasure of seeing him, not two paces from me, before my very eyes, saying witty and agreeable things to the Marquise de Main-

tenon, while he only talked to me of the rain and the weather." [1]

The crisis came soon after, when the king, who was much in love with her, wished to make her his mistress. She had seen the fall of La Vallière and the rise of Montespan, and now Montespan was falling. Madame de Maintenon was too consummate a schemer to be caught. Her love for Louis, such as it was, probably never gave her a single palpitation of the heart; she was always too perfectly poised and too infallible. Nor should one infer that she dreamed then of one day succeeding Marie Thérèse. The queen was in good health and bade fair to outlive Maintenon. Even if Her Majesty died shortly, what prospect was there that the pride of the Grand Monarch would suffer him to contract such a mésalliance? Cloaking herself in piety, Madame de Maintenon played the coquette; she charmed, she fascinated, and she evaded him; she allured and she preached, for a period of six or seven years. "His Majesty retires disconsolate," she says in one of her letters, "but never hopeless"; and in another, "I send him away always distressed, but never despairing." [2] What astonishing skill and tact! But he was not asking her to be his wife; he was asking her to be his mistress; and if her virtue and piety had really been what she and many others wish us to believe they were, would she not have given him an answer once and for all that would have settled the matter? When Louis XV made a proposition of the same sort to Madame de Périgord, Madame de Périgord instantly left the court. "Nothing is more clever than irreproachable behavior," said Madame de Maintenon at a later period. At the time in question, her behavior, irreproachable and undeniably clever, leads one to doubt her sincerity. If up to the summer of 1683, when he became free to make her

[1] Memoirs of Madame de Montespan, II, p. 167.
[2] Madame de Maintenon to Madame de Frontenac, 1677.

his wife, the king never lost the hope of making her his mistress, was it not because she played the false prude, almost to the hour that he married her?

However that may be, married she was to the King of France and Navarre, secretly and at night in the chapel of Versailles on the 12th of June, 1684.[1] Bontemps, the king's first *valet de chambre,* prepared the altar; Père La Chaise said mass; the Archbishop of Paris read the marriage service; Louvois, Minister of War, and Montchevreuil were the witnesses. The archbishop and Louvois both drew from the king a solemn promise that he would never declare this marriage. There were rumors of the marriage almost immediately, but nobody at court was certain for some time. Nearly four years later, the Palatine, in a letter under date of April 14, 1688, writes: "I cannot find out whether the king has married Madame de Maintenon, or not. Many people say she is his wife, and that the Archbishop of Paris has married them in the presence of the king's confessor and Maintenon's brother. Other people say this is not true, and it is impossible to find out what the facts are."

While people were thus discussing the matter, Mme. la Marquise de Maintenon was installed in her apartments at the head of the marble staircase, opposite the Hall of the King's Guards, and the first signs of her greatness were that she dropped at once the title Marquise, and was called always Madame de Maintenon, that the king in referring to her dropped the Maintenon, as too trivial, and called her simply Madame, and that her servants, in her own apartments only, addressed her as "Your Majesty."

If in the days of her favor Madame de Montespan had had a "haughtiness in everything that reached to the clouds,"

[1] The date is sometimes given as January, 1684. Lavallée seems to be the most reliable authority on the matter, and he gives the date as June, 1684.

one can imagine what she must have suffered when she was forced to pay her visit of ceremony to the new wife of the Grand Monarch. "A few days after the marriage, my health being somewhat reëstablished, I went to Petit-Bourg; but the Maréchal de Vivonne, his son Louis de Vivonne, all the Mortemarts, all the Rochehouarts, Thianges, Seignelays, and Blainvilles,—in a word, counts, marquises, barons, and duchesses,—came to find me and attack me in my desert, in order to represent to me that since Madame de Maintenon was now the wife of the king, I owed her my homage and my respectful compliments. 'The whole family has done so,' said these cruel relations; 'you only have not yet fulfilled this duty. You must do it, in God's name. She has neither airs nor hauteur; you will be marvelously well received. Your resistance would compromise us all.' Not desiring to harm or displease my family, and wishing above all to reinstate myself somewhat in the king's mind, I resolutely prepared for this distressing journey, and God gave me the necessary strength to execute it. I appeared in a long robe of gold and silver before the new wife of the monarch. The king, who was sitting at a table, rose for a moment and encouraged me by his greeting. I made the three pauses and the three reverences as I gradually approached Madame de Maintenon, who occupied a large and rich arm-chair of brocade. She did not rise; etiquette forbade it, and principally the presence of the king. Her complexion, ordinarily pale, and with a very slight tone of pink, was animated suddenly, and took all the colors of the rose. She made me a sign to seat myself on a stool, and it seemed to me that her amiable gaze apologized to me. She spoke to me of Petit-Bourg, of the waters of Bourbon, of her country place, of my children, and said to me, smiling, 'I am going to confide in you. M. le Prince has already asked Mlle. de Nantes for his grandson, M. le Duc de Bourbon, and His Highness promises us his grand-

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Françoise Athénaïs de Rochechouart, Marquise de Montespan

daughter for our Duc du Maine. Two or three years more, and we shall see all that.'" It must have been extremely gratifying to Madame de Montespan to be told in confidence what the future of her children was to be. In the days of her favor she had loyally helped and cherished Madame de Maintenon, praised her when the king disparaged her, retained her when the king wished to send her away, and made her the governess of those very children whom Madame de Maintenon, with her "our Duc du Maine," now so coolly appropriated to the king and herself. The poor woman from her stool could contemplate her work in the arm-chair of brocade, where sat her false friend, *la Toute-Puissante*. "After half an hour spent thus, I rose from this uncomfortable stool and made my farewell reverences. Madame de Maintenon, profiting by the king's having leaned over to write, rose five or six inches in her chair, and said to me these words: 'Do not let us cease to love one another, I implore you.' I came out from Madame de Maintenon by the door of mirrors which leads to the great gallery. There was much company there at the moment. The Prince de Salm came to meet me and said, 'You are flushed, and I can perfectly well understand why.' He pressed my hand affectionately. In all the salons they were eager to see me pass. Some courageous persons even came within touch of my fan, and all were more or less pleased with my downfall. I had seen all these figures at my feet, and almost all were under obligations to me." [1]

In the Duc de Saint-Simon's wonderful gallery there is hardly a portrait with which he has taken more pains than that of Madame de Maintenon. "Madame de Maintenon was a woman of much wit, which the good company, in which she had at first been merely tolerated, but in which she soon shone, had polished. The various positions she

[1] Memoirs of Madame de Montespan, II, p. 349.

had held had rendered her flattering, insinuating, complaisant, always seeking to please. The need she had of intrigues, those she had seen of all kinds, and been mixed up in for herself and for others, had given her the taste, the ability, and the habit of them. Incomparable grace, an easy manner, and yet measured and respectful, which in consequence of her long obscurity had become natural to her, marvelously aided her talents; her language was gentle, exact, well expressed, and naturally eloquent and brief. Her best time, for she was three or four years older than the king, had been the dainty phrase period, the superfine gallantry days, and it had so influenced her that she always retained evidences of it. She put on afterward an air of importance, but this gradually gave place to one of devoutness that she wore admirably. She was not absolutely false by disposition, but necessity had made her so, and her natural flightiness made her appear twice as false as she was. Her flightiness or inconstancy was of the most dangerous kind. With the exception of some of her old friends, to whom she had good reasons for remaining faithful, she favored people one moment only to cast them off the next. You were admitted to an audience with her, for instance, you pleased her in some manner, and forthwith she unbosomed herself to you as though you had known her from childhood. At the second audience you found her dry, laconic, cold. You racked your brains to discover the cause of this change. Mere loss of time! Flightiness was the sole reason of it. The distress and poverty in which she had so long lived had narrowed her mind and abased her heart and sentiments. Her feelings and thoughts were so circumscribed that she was in truth always inferior to what Madame Scarron should have been, and in everything and everywhere she found herself such. Nothing was more repelling than this meanness, joined to a situation so radiant.

"Devoutness was her strong point; by that she governed and held her place. . . . The profound ignorance of religion in which the king had been educated, and kept all his life, rendered him from the first an easy prey to the Jesuits. He became even more so with years, when he grew devout. Religion became his weak point. In this state it was easy to persuade him that a decisive and tremendous blow struck against the Protestants would give his name more grandeur than any of his ancestors had acquired, besides strengthening his power and increasing his authority. Madame de Maintenon was one of those who did most to make him believe this.

"It must not be imagined that in order to maintain her position Madame de Maintenon had no need of address; her reign, on the contrary, was only one continual intrigue. Her mornings, which she commenced very early, were occupied with obscure audiences for charitable or spiritual affairs. Pretty often at eight o'clock in the morning, or earlier, she went to some minister; the ministers of war, above all those of finance, were those with whom she had most business. Ordinarily, as soon as she rose, she went to St. Cyr, dined in her apartment there alone, or with some favorite of the house, gave as few audiences as possible, ruled over the arrangements of the establishment, meddled with the affairs of convents, read and replied to letters, received information and letters from her spies, and returned to Versailles just as the king was ready to enter her apartments. When with the king in her own room, they each occupied an arm-chair, with a table between them, at either side of the fireplace, hers toward the bed, the king's with its back to the wall where was the door of the antechamber; two stools were before the table, one for the minister who came to work, the other for his papers. During the work Madame de Maintenon read or worked at tapestry. She heard all that passed between the king and his minister, for they spoke out

loud. Rarely did she say anything, or, if so, it was of no moment. The king often asked her opinion; then she replied with great discretion. Never did she appear to lay stress on anything, still less to interest herself for anybody; but she had an understanding with the minister, who did not dare to oppose her in private, still less to trip in her presence. When some favor or some post was to be granted, the matter was arranged between them beforehand; and this it was that sometimes delayed her, without the king or anybody knowing the cause. She would send word to the minister that she wished to speak with him. He did not dare to bring anything forward until he had received her orders, until the revolving mechanism of each day had given them the leisure to confer together. That done, the minister proposed and showed a list. If by chance the king stopped at the name Madame de Maintenon wished, the minister stopped too, and went no further. If the king stopped at some other, the minister proposed that he should look at those which were also fitting, allowed the king leisure to make his observations, and profited by them to exclude the people who were not wanted. Rarely did he propose expressly the name to which he wished to come, but always suggested several that he tried to balance against each other, so as to embarrass the king in his choice. Then the king asked the minister's opinion, and the minister, after touching upon other names, fixed upon the one he had selected. The king asked Madame de Maintenon what she thought. She smiled, shammed incapacity, said a word upon some other name, then returned, if she had not fixed herself there at first, to that which the minister had proposed; so that three fourths of the favors and opportunities which passed through the hands of the ministers in her apartments were disposed of by her, without the king's having the least suspicion. Yet the king was constantly on his guard, not only against Madame de Main-

tenon, but against his ministers also. Many a time it happened that when sufficient care had not been taken, and he perceived that a minister or a general wished to favor a relative or protégé of Madame de Maintenon, he firmly opposed the appointment on that account alone, and the remarks he uttered thereupon made Madame de Maintenon very timid and very measured when she wished openly to ask a favor. By these particulars it will be seen that this clever woman did nearly all she wished, but not always when or how she wished.

" Toward nine o'clock in the evening two waiting-women came to undress her. Immediately afterward her *maître d'hôtel* brought her supper, soup or something light. As soon as she had finished her meal, her women put her to bed, and meanwhile the king and his minister did not cease working or speak lower. This done, ten o'clock had arrived; the curtains of Madame de Maintenon's bed were drawn, and the king, after saying good night to her, went to supper."

In her new position Madame de Maintenon found both Monsieur and Monseigneur hostile to her. Monseigneur, however, was too dutiful a son to refuse to pay his court. Monsieur came as seldom as he could; " it was not her success that annoyed him, but simply the idea that Madame Scarron had become his sister-in-law; that was insupportable to him." Madame, his wife, could not endure her, and, in her turn, Madame de Maintenon did all she could to prejudice the king against the Palatine. This attitude of the royal family was natural enough, and yet the king might have done worse than marry Madame de Maintenon.

He secured for his wife a very beautiful and imposing woman, who possessed " incomparable grace." Madame de Montespan herself testifies to the personal charm of her false friend: " Madame de Maintenon was already forty-four years old, and only appeared to be thirty. This freshness, that she

owed either to painstaking care or to her happy and quite peculiar constitution, gave her that air of youth which fascinated the eyes of the courtiers and of the king." She was forty-nine when she married Louis, and probably appeared about thirty-five. She had wit and intellect and tact, and she was serenity itself. "For twenty-six years," said she (at a later period), "I never displayed the slightest impatience at any time." With her gracious bearing and her calm, even temper, she must have seemed to a king of forty-six, who had buried his queen and cast off his mistresses, the ideal wife for his old age. Then, too, she was pious and devout, she wished to withdraw the king from the world and give him to God; she had no ambitions, she desired to meddle in nothing, she was grateful when her husband took her into his confidence, but she longed only to save his soul. It seemed almost too wonderful to be true. It was not true.

The one genuine thing about Madame de Maintenon was her personal beauty; that she did not owe to art. Under the guise of humility and nothingness she was devoured by pride and ambition; she labored unceasingly to get herself declared Queen of France; she meddled with everything and wished to rule in everything; she placed herself in the hands of the Jesuits and worked with all her might to bring about the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes; she seized on religion to elevate herself, and assumed toward the court a position of papal infallibility—what she said was right to do, was right, and what she said was wrong, was wrong; she filled the king with all sorts of scruples that gave her a tighter grip; she manœuvered to have him work with his ministers in her apartments, that she might know all that was being done; she tricked him before his very eyes, and kept the ministers under her thumb; she was frightfully vindictive, never forgot or forgave any one who crossed her, and crushed those who stood in her way, as fast as she could, without mercy;

she kept everybody gravitating about her apartments; and yet she was always telling her girls and women at St. Cyr that she was nobody and had nothing, that she "yearned after her obscurity," and that she needed sympathy in her hard lot.

She strikes that note in the following letter to Madame de Glapion, *dame de St. Cyr:* "I have often told you that the only time I can take for my prayers and the mass is when other people sleep, for when people once begin to enter my room, I am not my own mistress, I have not an instant to myself. They begin to come in about half-past seven in the morning. First is Maréchal;[1] he has no sooner gone than M. Fagon[2] enters; he is followed by M. Bloin,[3] or some one else sent to inquire how I am. Sometimes I have pressing letters to write which I must get in here. Next come persons of greater consequence: one day, M. de Chamillart; another, the archbishop; to-day, a general of the army on the point of departure; to-morrow, an audience that I must give, having been demanded under such circumstances that I cannot defer it. M. le Duc du Maine waited in my antechamber the other day until M. de Chamillart had finished. When he went out, M. du Maine came in, and kept me until the king arrived; for there is a little etiquette in this, that no one leaves me till some one of higher rank enters and sends them away. When the king comes, they all have to go. The king stays till he goes to mass. I do not know if you have observed that all this time I am not yet dressed. I still have my nightcap on, but my room by this time is like a church, a perpetual procession is going on; everybody passes through it; the comings and goings are endless. The Duchesse de Bourgogne comes with a number of ladies, and there they stay while I eat my dinner. Around me stand a circle of

[1] The king's surgeon. [2] The king's physician.
[3] The king's first *valet de chambre.*

ladies, so that I cannot even ask for something to drink. I turn to them sometimes and say, 'This is a great honor for me, but I would like to have a footman.' With that, each of them wants to serve me, and hastens to bring me what I want, but this is only another sort of embarrassment and annoyance to me. At last they go off to dine themselves; for my dinner is at twelve o'clock with Madame d'Heudicourt and Madame de Dangeau, who are invalids. Here I am at last alone with them; every one else has gone. I might amuse myself now for a moment with a game at backgammon, but usually Monseigneur takes this time to come and see me, because on some days he does not dine, and on other days he has dined early and so comes after the others. He is the hardest man in the world to talk with, for he never says a word. I must try to entertain him because I am in my own apartment. If I were elsewhere, I could lean back in my chair and say nothing if I chose, but now I must manage to find something to say, and that is not very enlivening. When the king returns from hunting, he comes to me; then my door is closed, and no one enters. Here I am then alone with him. I must bear his troubles, if he has any, his sadness, his nervous dejection; sometimes he bursts into tears which he cannot control, or else he complains of illness. Then a minister comes, and the king works with him. While the king continues to work, I sup, but it is not once in two months that I can do so at my ease. I feel that the king has almost finished with the minister; sometimes he wants to show me something, so that I am always hurried. The only thing I can do is to eat very fast, and I am often oppressed by it. I have been about since six in the morning, and have not breathed freely the whole day. I am overcome with weariness. Sometimes the king perceives it, and says, 'You are very tired, are you not? You ought to go to bed.' So I go to bed. My women come and undress me, but I feel that the king wants to talk with me, and

is waiting till they go, or some minister still remains, and I fear my women will hear what he says. What can I do? I hurry, I hurry, so that I almost faint, and you must know that all my life I have hated to be hurried. At last I am in bed. I send away my women. The king approaches, and sits down by my pillow. What can I do then? I am in bed, but I have need of many things; mine is not a glorified body without wants. There is no one there whom I can ask for what I need, not a single woman. It is not because I could not have them, for the king is full of kindness, and if he thought I wanted one woman, he would endure ten. But it never comes into his head that I am constraining myself. He believes that if I show no wants, I have none."

This letter probably rendered Madame de Glapion quite contented with the quiet life of St. Cyr, and not at all envious of Madame de Maintenon in her splendid apartments at Versailles. It contains a good deal of exaggeration and false coloring. Madame de Maintenon left nothing undone to keep the king, the Duchesse de Bourgogne, the Duc de Bourgogne, the Duc du Maine, and the princesses in her apartments as much as possible, that she might know all that was going on, and have in hand every scrap of information needed for her back-stairs diplomacy. This of course imposed on her a heavy burden, and undoubtedly the etiquette was very fatiguing. As she grew older, and her hope of being declared Queen of France vanished, her physical weariness was stronger than any other emotion. But before that time came, her pet pose was humility and nothingness.

Mention has been made of St. Cyr. It was an institution in which perpetual hosannas were raised to the name of Maintenon. The idea of founding a school where the daughters of nobles who were poor could be educated at the expense of the state was a good one, and does Madame de Maintenon credit. She gained largely by it, however. It gave her a

place where she could carry out her passion for directing the lives of the young, where she could create her own atmosphere, and to which she could retire in opulence if she lost the king. "The establishment of St. Cyr," says Saint-Simon, "which had more than four hundred thousand livres' yearly income, and much money in reserve, was obliged by the rules which founded it to receive Madame de Maintenon, if she wished to retire there; to obey her in all things as the absolute and sole superior; to keep her and everybody connected with her, her domestics, her equipages, her table, at the expense of the house." As St. Cyr was founded in the year which followed her marriage with the king, it may be seen that Madame de Maintenon had an eye for the future.

"The declaration of her marriage was always her most ardent desire. She wished above all things to be proclaimed queen, and never lost sight of the idea. Once she was near indeed to seeing it gratified. The king had actually given her his word that she should be declared, and the ceremony was about to take place. But it was postponed, and forever, by the representations of Louvois to the king. . . . Louvois had gained the confidence of the king to such an extent that he had been one of the two witnesses of the marriage of His Majesty with Madame de Maintenon. He had the courage to show he was worthy of this confidence by representing to the king the ignominy of declaring that marriage, and drew from him his word that never in his life would he do so. Several years afterward, Louvois, who took care to be well informed of all that passed in the palace, found out that Madame de Maintenon had been scheming again in order to be declared queen, that the king had had the weakness to promise that she should be, and that the declaration was about to be made. He put some papers in his hand, and went at once to the king, who was in his private apartment. Seeing

Françoise d'Aubigné, Marquise de Maintenon

Louvois at an unexpected hour, the king asked him what brought him there. 'Something pressing and important,' replied Louvois, with a sad manner that astonished the king, and induced him to command the valets present to quit the room. They went away, in fact, but left the door open, so that they could hear all, and see all, too, by the glass. This was the great danger of the cabinets. The valets being gone, Louvois did not dissimulate from the king his mission. Surprised at being discovered, the king tried to shuffle out of the matter, and, pressed by his minister, began to move so as to gain the other cabinet where the valets were, and thus deliver himself. But Louvois, who perceived what the king was about, threw himself on his knees and stopped him, drew from his side a little sword he wore, presented the handle to the king, and prayed him to kill him on the spot if he would persist in declaring his marriage, in breaking his word, and in covering himself in the eyes of Europe with ignominy. The king stamped, fumed, and told Louvois to let him go. But Louvois squeezed him tighter by the legs for fear he would escape, represented to him the shame of what he had decided on doing; in a word, succeeded so well that he drew for the second time from the king a promise that the marriage should never be declared. Madame de Maintenon, meanwhile, expected every moment to be proclaimed queen. At the end of some days, disturbed by the silence of the king, she ventured to touch upon the subject. The embarrassment she caused the king much troubled her. He softened the affair as much as he could, but finished by begging her to think no more of being declared, and never to speak of it to him again. After the first shock that the loss of her hopes caused her, she sought to find out to whom she was beholden for it. She soon learned the truth, and it is not surprising that she swore to obtain Louvois's disgrace, and never ceased to work at it until successful. She waited her opportunity,

and undermined her enemy at leisure, availing herself of every occasion to make him odious to the king." [1]

Thus in spite of her great success, and her astonishing influence over the Grand Monarch, Madame de Maintenon never realized her chief ambition of being proclaimed Queen of France. Her position, however, was none the less commanding, and the king, who loved her more than she loved him, treated her always in public with marked deference. Nothing better illustrates that deference than the famous scene at the camp of Compiègne (1698): "The king wished to show the court all the manœuvers of war; the siege of Compiègne was therefore undertaken, according to due form, with lines, trenches, batteries, mines, etc. On Saturday, the 13th of September, the assault took place. To witness it the king, Madame de Maintenon, all the ladies of the court, and a number of gentlemen stationed themselves upon an old rampart from which the plain and all the dispositions of the troops could be seen. I was in the half-circle very close to the king. It was the most beautiful sight that can be imagined, to see all that army, and the prodigious number of spectators on horse and foot, and that game of attack and defense so cleverly conducted. But a spectacle of another sort, that I could paint forty years hence as well as to-day, so strongly did it strike me, was that which from the summit of this rampart the king gave to all his army, and to the innumerable crowd of spectators of all kinds in the plain below. Madame de Maintenon faced the plain and the troops in her sedan-chair, alone, between its three windows drawn up, her porters having retired to a distance. On the left pole in front sat Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne; and on the same side, standing in a semicircle, were Mme. la Duchesse, Mme. la Princesse de Conti, and all the ladies, and behind them, again, many men. At the right window of the sedan-chair

[1] Saint-Simon, III, p. 6.

stood the king, and a little in the rear a semicircle of the most distinguished men of the court. The king was nearly always uncovered, and every now and then stooped to speak to Madame de Maintenon, to explain to her what she saw, and the reason for each movement. Each time that he did so she was obliging enough to open the window four or five inches, but never half-way, for I noticed particularly, and I admit that I was more attentive to this spectacle than to that of the troops. Sometimes she opened of her own accord to ask some question of him, but generally it was he who, without waiting for her, stooped down to instruct her of what was passing; and sometimes, if she did not notice him, he tapped at the glass to make her open it. He never spoke, save to her, except when he gave a few brief orders, or just answered Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, who wanted to make him speak, and with whom Madame de Maintenon carried on a conversation by signs, without opening the front window, through which the young duchess screamed to her from time to time. I watched the countenance of every one carefully; all expressed surprise tempered with prudence and shame, that was, as it were, ashamed of itself; every one behind the chair and in the semicircle watched this scene more than what was going on in the army. The king often put his hat on the top of the chair in order to get his head in to speak, and this continual exercise tired his loins very much. Monseigneur was on horseback in the plain with the young princes. It was about five o'clock in the afternoon, and the weather was as brilliant as could be desired. . . . Toward the moment of the capitulation, Madame de Maintenon apparently asked permission to go away, for the king cried, 'The chairmen of Madame!' They came and took her away; in less than a quarter of an hour afterward the king retired also, and nearly everybody else. There was much interchange of glances, nudging with elbows, and then whisperings in the

ear. Everybody was full of what had taken place on the rampart between the king and Madame de Maintenon. Even the soldiers asked what meant that sedan-chair, and the king stooping every moment to put his head inside of it. It became necessary gently to silence these questions of the troops. What effect this sight had upon the foreigners present, and what they said of it, may be imagined. All over Europe it was as much talked of as the camp of Compiègne itself." [1]

According to her lights, and his, Madame de Maintenon achieved the king's salvation. But at what a frightful cost! "The king," she had written in 1681, "begins to think seriously of his salvation and that of his subjects. If God preserves him to us, there will be no longer but one religion in the kingdom. This is the feeling of M. de Louvois, and I believe him more willingly upon the subject than M. de Colbert, who thinks only of his finances and scarcely ever of his religion." A few years later, she would not have believed Louvois under oath on any subject. Poor Colbert! Working early and late to develop the resources of France, and performing the labors of Hercules in his endeavor to maintain some proportion between the receipts and expenditures of a Sun King, what time had he to think of anything but finances? To France he was worth a wilderness of Maintenons. For Maintenon was fatal to France. The havoc wrought by a wife who achieved religious intolerance was far more serious than the scandal of a mistress who gave fêtes. "The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, without the slightest pretext or necessity, was the fruit of a frightful plot in which the new wife of the king was one of the chief conspirators, and which depopulated a quarter of the realm, ruined its commerce, weakened it in every direction, tore in pieces a world of families, armed relatives against relatives, banished French manufactures to foreign lands and enabled them to

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 128.

flourish at the expense of France, and gave to the world the spectacle of a prodigious population proscribed, stripped, fugitive, wandering, without crime, and seeking shelter far from their country."[1] To place all the responsibility for this wide-spread misery on the shoulders of a woman would be unjust and inaccurate. A spirit of intolerance pervaded the whole Roman Catholic party in France; but Madame de Maintenon was the personification of that spirit, and she, more even than Père La Chaise, had the ear of the king.

She never really loved him; and when at the last he lay dying, and there was nothing more to be gained, she was old and weary, and so anxious to get herself settled at St. Cyr that she threw off her mask and revealed herself. "In the evening (August 29, 1715) it was known that the king had only recovered for a moment. . . . His brain appeared confused; he himself said he felt very ill. Toward eleven o'clock his leg was examined. The gangrene was found to be in the foot and knee; the thigh was much inflamed. He swooned during this examination. He had perceived with much pain that Madame de Maintenon was no longer near him. She had in fact gone off on the previous day with very dry eyes to St. Cyr, not intending to return. He asked for her several times during the day. Her departure could not be hidden. He sent for her to St. Cyr, and she came back in the evening. Friday, August 30th, was a very bad day, preceded by a bad night. The king continually lost his reason. About five o'clock in the evening Madame de Maintenon left him, gave away her furniture to her domestics, and went to St. Cyr, never to leave it." She departed, then, at five o'clock on Friday, the 30th of August, but the king did not die until quarter past eight on Sunday, the 1st of September; and yet Madame de Maintenon wrote a few days later to the Princesse des Ursins a letter in which she said, "I have seen

[1] Saint-Simon, III, p. 3.

the king die like a saint and a hero." Whatever opinion one may have as to the truth of that line, there is no doubt as to the accuracy of the next: "I am in a most comfortable retreat." She had had a pension of forty-eight thousand livres a year from the king, and as the Duc d'Orléans, in spite of all the harm she had done him, was generous enough to continue her pension, all her household expenses, of course, being paid by St. Cyr, she passed the remaining four years of her life in opulence and in an atmosphere of hosannas. She was over eighty when the king died, and had earned her repose.[1]

When Peter the Great came to France in 1717, he did not forget to visit St. Cyr. "On Friday, the 11th of June, he went from Versailles to St. Cyr, where he saw all the household, and the girls in their classes. He was received there like the king. He wished to see Madame de Maintenon, who, expecting his curiosity, had buried herself in her bed, all the curtains closed, except one which was half open. The Czar entered her chamber, pulled back the window-curtains upon arriving, then the bed-curtains, took a good long stare at her, said not a word to her, nor did she open her lips, and, without making her any kind of reverence, went his way."[2]

In like fashion we draw aside the curtain of the centuries, we take a good long stare at her, and having seen her as she was, without making her any kind of reverence, we go our way.

[1] Madame de Maintenon died at St. Cyr on the 15th of April, 1719.
[2] Saint-Simon, III, p. 98.

Louis of France, Grand Dauphin

II

MONSEIGNEUR

IGNORANCE sat hard on Monseigneur, but it was not for lack of the means of education. If the Grand Monarch could have had in his youth as splendid a schooling as that he planned for his eldest son, he would undoubtedly have avoided many of the errors into which he fell. What the father himself had lacked, he was determined that the son should have, that he might truly be the Grand Dauphin, a complete man, a model prince, and in the future a great king. Montausier, the highest representative in French society of morality and intelligence, was one preceptor; the great Bossuet was another. Blondel taught him mathematics; Fléchier and Tillemont wrote for him lives of Theodosius and St. Louis; Huet, Pierre Danet, and Père de la Rue published *ad usum Delphini,* that splendid edition of the Latin classics, with notes and explanations, that Monseigneur might enter the realm of antiquity; Bossuet unfolded before the eyes of his royal pupil in his *Universal History* the rise and fall of nations, the duties of kings to God, and of men to kings; and, to crown the work, the Grand Monarch himself wrote his *Memoirs,* for the use of his son, explaining how he governed, and declaring that only by work, and by continuous work, could a sovereign rule as well as reign. How bitter then must have been Louis's secret disappointment when the son on whom such hopes were centered turned out to be only the greatest wolf-hunter of the time!

"Monseigneur was rather tall than short," says Saint-Simon; "very fat, but without being bloated; with a very lofty and noble aspect without any harshness; and he would have had a very agreeable face if M. le Prince de Conti had not unfortunately broken his nose in playing while they were both very young. He was of a very beautiful fair complexion, and had a face everywhere covered with a healthy red, but without expression; the most beautiful legs in the world; his feet singularly small and delicate. He wavered always in walking, and felt his way with his feet; he was always afraid of falling, and if the path was not perfectly even and straight, he called for assistance. He was a good horseman, and looked well when mounted, but he was not a bold rider. He was very fond of the table, but always without indecency; he made but one real meal a day, and was content. . . . He was ignorant to the last degree, and had a thorough aversion for learning; so that, according to his own admission, ever since he had been released from the hands of teachers, he had never read anything except the article in the *Gazette de France* in which deaths and marriages are recorded. His avariciousness, except in certain things, passed all belief. He kept an account of his personal expenditure, and knew to a sou what his smallest and largest expenses amounted to. He spent large sums in building, in furniture, in jewels, and in hunting.[1] . . . As for character, he had none; he was without enlightenment or knowledge of any kind, and radically incapable of acquiring any; very idle, without imagination or productiveness; without taste, without choice, without discernment; neither seeing the weariness he caused others, nor that he was a ball moving at haphazard by the impulsion of others; obstinate and little to excess in everything; amazingly credulous and accessible to prejudice, keeping himself always in the most pernicious hands, yet incapable of

[1] Monseigneur had a pension of fifty thousand livres a month.

seeing his position or of changing it; absorbed in his fat and his ignorance; so that, without any desire to do ill, he would have made a pernicious king."

The portrait is somewhat exaggerated, for Saint-Simon was always at odds with Monseigneur. It is going too far to say that Monseigneur was "radically incapable of acquiring knowledge." He had a good memory, on the testimony of Saint-Simon himself: "Arriving at Fontainebleau one day, during the movements of the army, Monseigneur set to work reciting for amusement a long list of strange names of places in the forest. 'Dear me, Monseigneur,' said the Princesse de Conti, 'what a good memory you have! What a pity it is loaded with such things only!' If he felt the reproach, he did not profit by it."

The Palatine brings out some traits of the dauphin's character that Saint-Simon has not touched: "All that was good in Monseigneur came from his preceptors; all that was bad from himself. He never either loved or hated any one much, and yet he was very wicked. His greatest pleasure was to do something to vex a person; and immediately afterward, if he could do something very pleasing to the same person, he would set about it with great willingness. In every respect he was of the strangest temper possible; when one thought he was good-humored, he was angry; and when one supposed him to be ill-humored, he was in an amiable mood. No one could ever guess him rightly, and I do not believe that his like was or ever will be born. It cannot be said that he had much wit; but still less was he a fool. Nobody was ever more prompt to seize the ridiculous points of anything in himself or in others; he told stories agreeably; he was a keen observer, and dreaded nothing so much as to be one day king, not so much from affection for his father, as from dread of the trouble of reigning, for he was so extremely idle that he neglected all things. . . . He was a very obedient son, and

never opposed the king's will in any way. If he had chosen, he might have enjoyed greater credit with his father. He would never know anything about state affairs, lest he should be obliged to attend the councils and have no more time to hunt."

Saint-Simon gives an example of this indifference of Monseigneur to affairs of state: "After Ramillies, when everybody was waiting for the return of Chamillart to learn the truth, Monseigneur went away to dine at Meudon, saying he should learn the news soon enough. From this time he showed no more interest in what was passing. When news was brought that Lille was invested, he turned on his heel before the letter announcing it had been read to the end. The king called him back to hear the rest. He returned and heard it. The reading finished, he went away, without offering a word. Entering the apartments of the Princesse de Conti, he found there Madame d'Espinoy, who had much property in Flanders, and who had wished to take a trip there. 'Madame,' said he, smiling, 'how would you go just now to get to Lille?' And at once made them acquainted with the investment. These things really wounded the Princesse de Conti." And one might safely add, the king also.

When actually with the army, Monseigneur cut no better figure. "Meanwhile (1693), the army which had been sent into Germany under the command of Monseigneur and of the Maréchal de Lorges did little or nothing. Maréchal de Lorges wished to attack Heilbronn, but Monseigneur was opposed to it; and, to the great regret of the principal generals and of the troops, the attack was not made. Monseigneur returned early to Versailles."

Once Monseigneur declared himself with some force. It was at the memorable council called by the king at Fontainebleau to decide whether France should accept or reject the will

of Charles II, which left the crown of Spain to the Duc d'Anjou. "Monseigneur, drowned as he was in fat and sloth, appeared in quite another character from his usual one at this council. To the great surprise of the king and his assistants, when it was his turn to speak he expressed himself with force in favor of accepting the testament. Then, turning toward the king in a respectful but firm manner, he said that he took the liberty of asking for his inheritance; that the monarchy of Spain belonged to the queen his mother, and consequently to him; that he surrendered it willingly to his second son for the tranquillity of Europe; but that to no other would he yield an inch of ground. These words, spoken with an inflamed countenance, caused excessive surprise. The king listened very attentively, and then said to Madame de Maintenon, 'And you, Madame, what do you think upon all this?' She began by affecting modesty; but pressed and even commanded to speak, she expressed herself with becoming confusion; briefly sang the praises of Monseigneur, whom she feared and liked but little, sentiments perfectly reciprocated, and at last was for accepting the will."

With all his faults, Monseigneur was not, as Saint-Simon declares he was, without taste. He had been taught to design and color by Silvestre, did it fairly well, and took pleasure in it. He was a good judge of pictures, and had an excellent collection by the best masters in his apartments at Versailles and Meudon. He displayed much taste, too, in the objects of art with which he had filled his cabinets. But hunting was his great passion, a taste he inherited from his father; for the three great hunters of the reign were the Grand Monarch, Monseigneur, and the Duc de Berry. The chase of the wolf was that which Monseigneur loved best. To hunt he rose frequently at five o'clock in the morning, he pursued his wolf for ten leagues from Versailles, he hunted ten hours at a stretch, and returned to the château at eleven o'clock in the

evening. He was persistent. "Monseigneur," says Dangeau, under date of May 5, 1698, "hunted the wolf and took him. He had already hunted this same wolf eight times without being able to kill him." In a few years he had destroyed every wolf in the environs of Versailles. His hunting parties were usually limited to twenty-five noblemen; and the costume which he commanded for the wolf-hunt was a bright blue coat, trimmed with gold and silver lace, a red waistcoat, blue knee-breeches and top boots, gloves fringed with gold lace, and a hat with a white plume. Monseigneur met with some accidents. Dangeau records two falls that he had from his horse while hunting the wolf, and at Marly, in September, 1689, he narrowly escaped injury from a wild boar. "Having seen a large wild boar in a pool, Monseigneur dismounted to fire better. The boar, seeing Monseigneur, charged at him. Monseigneur fired and wounded him, but the boar charged none the less furiously, and as he was very near, Monseigneur struck him with the butt of the gun on his head, and turned him aside a little. He splashed mud on the dress of Monseigneur, but neither wounded him nor threw him down. Monseigneur had much presence of mind, without which he would have been dangerously wounded." [1]

After the death of his wife, the Dauphine of Bavaria, Monseigneur was married secretly, about 1695, to his mistress, Mlle. de Chouin. She was a quiet, unassuming person. Her marriage was never declared, and after the death of Monseigneur she lived modestly in retirement.

The chief event in the career of the king's eldest son was his death, in its effect on the court and on the succession to the throne; and the death of Monseigneur is one of Saint-Simon's greatest pictures, a canvas crowded with figures and details, in which nothing is forgotten, and in which the mo-

[1] Dangeau, II, p. 478.

The Grand Dauphin and his Family

tives of men are revealed: "On Thursday, the 9th of April, 1711, Monseigneur rose and meant to go out wolf-hunting; but as he was dressing, such a fit of weakness seized him that he fell into his chair. Boudin made him get into bed again, but all day his pulse was in an alarming state. The king, only half informed by Fagon of what had taken place, believed there was nothing the matter, and went out walking at Marly after dinner, receiving news from time to time. Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne and Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne dined at Meudon, and they would not quit Monseigneur for one moment. The duchess added to the strict duties of a daughter-in-law all that her gracefulness could suggest, and gave everything to Monseigneur with her own hand. Her heart could not have been troubled by what her reason foresaw; but, nevertheless, her care and attention were extreme, without any airs of affectation or acting. The Duc de Bourgogne, simple and holy as he was, and full of the idea of his duty, exaggerated his attention, and although there was strong suspicion of smallpox, neither of them quitted Monseigneur, except for the king's supper. The next day, Friday, the 10th, in reply to his express demands, the king was informed of the extremely dangerous state of Monseigneur. He had said on the previous evening that he would go on the following morning to Meudon, and remain there during all the illness of Monseigneur, whatever its nature might be. He was now as good as his word. Immediately after mass he set out for Meudon. Before doing so, he forbade his children, and all who had not had the smallpox, to go there, which was suggested by a motive of kindness.

"I will continue to speak of myself with the same truthfulness with which I speak of others, and with as much exactness as possible. According to the terms on which I was with Monseigneur and his intimates, may be imagined the impression made upon me by this news. I felt that one way

or other, well or ill, the malady of Monseigneur would soon terminate. I was quite at my ease at La Ferté. I resolved therefore to wait there until I received fresh particulars. I despatched a courier to Madame de Saint-Simon, requesting her to send me another the next day, and I passed the rest of this day in an ebb and flow of feelings, the man and the Christian struggling against the man and the courtier, and in the midst of a crowd of vague fancies catching glimpses of the future, painted in most agreeable colors. The courier I expected so impatiently arrived the next day, Sunday, the 12th of April, after dinner. The smallpox had declared itself, I learned, and was going on as well as could be wished. I believed Monseigneur saved, and wished to remain at my own house; nevertheless I took advice, as I have done all my life, and with great regret set out the next morning. At La Queue, about six leagues from Versailles, I met a financier of the name of La Fontaine, whom I knew well. He was coming from Paris and Versailles, and came up to me as I changed horses. Monseigneur, he said, was going on admirably; and he added details that convinced me that the prince was out of all danger. I arrived at Versailles, full of this opinion, which was confirmed by Madame de Saint-Simon and by everybody I met, so that nobody any longer feared, except on account of the treacherous nature of this disease in a very fat man of fifty.

"The king held his council, and worked in the evening with his ministers as usual. He saw Monseigneur morning and evening, oftentimes in the afternoon, and always remained long by the bedside. On the Monday I arrived (at Versailles), he had dined early, and had driven from Meudon to Marly, where the Duchesse de Bourgogne joined him. He saw in passing, on the outskirts of the garden of Versailles, his grandchildren, who had come out to meet him; but he would not let them come near, and said good day from a dis-

tance. The Duchesse de Bourgogne had had the smallpox, but no trace was left. The king liked only his own houses, and could not bear to be anywhere else. That is why his visits to Meudon were few and short. Madame de Maintenon was still more out of her element there. Although her chamber was everywhere a sanctuary where only ladies entitled to the most extreme familiarity entered, she always wanted another retreat near at hand entirely inaccessible except to the Duchesse de Bourgogne alone, and that only for a few instants at a time. Thus she had St. Cyr for Versailles and for Marly, and at Marly also a particular retiring-place, and at Fontainebleau she had her town house. Seeing therefore that Monseigneur was getting on well, and that a long sojourn at Meudon would be necessary, the upholsterers of the king were ordered to furnish for Madame de Maintenon a house in the park, which once belonged to the Chancellor le Tellier, but which Monseigneur had bought.

"When I arrived at Versailles, I wrote to M. de Beauvilliers at Meudon, praying him to apprise the king that I had returned on account of the illness of Monseigneur, and that I would have gone to see him, but that, never having had the smallpox, I was included in the prohibition. M. de Beauvilliers did as I asked, and sent back word to me that my return had been very well timed, and that the king still forbade me as well as Madame de Saint-Simon to go to Meudon. This fresh prohibition did not distress me in the least. I was informed of all that was passing there, and that satisfied me.

"There were yet contrasts at Meudon worth noticing. Mlle. de Chouin never appeared while the king was with Monseigneur, but kept close in her apartment. When the coast was clear, she came out, and took up her position by the sick man's bedside. All sorts of compliments passed between her and Madame de Maintenon, and yet they never met. The king asked Madame de Maintenon if she had seen Mlle. de

Chouin, and upon learning that she had not, was but ill pleased. Therefore Madame de Maintenon sent excuses and apologies to Mlle. de Chouin, and said she hoped to see her soon, strange compliments from one chamber to another under the same roof. They never saw each other. It should be observed that Père Tellier, the king's confessor, was also incognito at Meudon, and dwelt in a retired room from which he issued to see the king, but never approached the apartments of Monseigneur.

"Versailles presented another scene. Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne and Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne held their court openly there, and this court resembled the first gleams of the dawn. All the court assembled there; all Paris also; and as discretion and precaution were never French virtues, all Meudon came as well. People were believed on their word when they declared that they had not entered the apartments of Monseigneur that day, and consequently could not bring the infection. When the Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne rose, when they went to bed, when they dined and supped with the ladies, all public conversations, all assemblies, were opportunities of paying court to them. The apartments could not contain the crowd. The characteristic features of the scene were many. Couriers arrived every quarter of an hour, and reminded people of the illness of Monseigneur; he was going on as well as could be expected; confidence and hope were easily felt; but there was an extreme desire to please at the new court. The Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne exhibited majesty and gravity, mixed with gaiety; obligingly received all, continually spoke to every one. The crowd wore an air of complaisance; reciprocal satisfaction showed in every face. The Duc and Duchesse de Berry were treated almost as nobody. Thus five days fled away in increasing thought of future events, in preparation to be ready for whatever might happen.

"On Tuesday, the 14th of April, I went to see the chancellor, and asked for information upon the state of Monseigneur. He assured me it was good, and repeated to me the words Fagon had spoken to him, 'that things were going on according to their wishes, and beyond their hopes.' The chancellor appeared to me very confident, and I had faith in him, so much the more because he was on an extremely good footing with Monseigneur. Indeed, Monseigneur had so much recovered that the fishwomen came in a body on the same day to congratulate him, as they had done after his attack of indigestion. They threw themselves at the foot of his bed, which they kissed several times, and in their joy said they would go back to Paris and have a *Te Deum* sung. But Monseigneur, who was not insensible to these marks of popular affection, told them it was not yet time, thanked them, and gave them a dinner and some money. As I was returning to my apartments, I saw the Duchesse d'Orléans walking on the terrace. She called to me; but I pretended not to notice her, because La Montauban was with her, and hastened to my cabinet. Almost immediately afterward Mme. la Duchesse d'Orléans joined me there. We were bursting to speak to each other alone, upon a point on which our thoughts were alike. She had left Meudon not an hour before, and she had the same tale to tell as the chancellor. Everybody was at ease there, she said; and then she extolled the care and capacities of the doctors, exaggerating their success; and, to speak frankly and to our shame, she and I lamented together to see Monseigneur, in spite of his age and his fat, escape from so dangerous an illness. She reflected seriously but wittily that, after an illness of this sort, apoplexy was not to be looked for; that an attack of indigestion was equally unlikely to arise, considering the care Monseigneur had taken not to overgorge himself since his recent danger; and we concluded more than dolefully that henceforth

we must make up our minds that Monseigneur would live and reign for a long time. In a word, we let ourselves loose in this rare conversation, although not without an occasional scruple of conscience which disturbed it. Madame de Saint-Simon very devoutly tried her best to put a drag upon our tongues, but the drag broke, so to speak, and we continued our free discourse, humanly speaking very reasonable on our parts, but which we felt was not according to religion. Thus two hours passed, seemingly very short. Madame d'Orléans went away, and I repaired with Madame de Saint-Simon to receive a numerous company.

"But while all was tranquillity at Versailles, everything had changed its aspect at the Château of Meudon. The king had seen Monseigneur several times during the day; but in his after-dinner visit he was so much struck with the extraordinary swelling of the face and of the head that he shortened his stay, and on leaving the château, shed tears. He was reassured as much as possible, and after the council he took a walk in the garden. Nevertheless Monseigneur had already mistaken Mme. la Princesse de Conti for some one else, and Boudin, the doctor, was alarmed. Monseigneur himself had been so from the first, and admitted that for a long time before being attacked, he had been very unwell, and so much so on Good Friday that he had been unable to read his prayer-book in chapel. Toward four o'clock he grew worse, so much so that Boudin proposed to Fagon to call in other doctors, more familiar with the disease than they were. But Fagon flew into a rage at this, and would call in nobody. He declared that it would be better to act for themselves, and keep Monseigneur's state secret, although it was hourly growing worse, and toward seven o'clock was perceived by several valets and courtiers. But nobody dared to open his mouth before Fagon, and the king was actually allowed to go to supper and to finish it without interruption,

believing on the faith of Fagon that Monseigneur was going on well. While the king supped tranquilly, all those who were in the sick-chamber began to lose their wits. Fagon and the others poured down physic on physic, without leaving time for any to work. The curé, who was accustomed to go and learn the news every evening, found, against all custom, the doors thrown wide open, and the valets in confusion. He entered the chamber, and perceiving what was the matter, ran to the bedside, took the hand of Monseigneur, spoke to him of God, and seeing him full of consciousness, but scarcely able to speak, drew from him a sort of confession, of which nobody had hitherto thought, and suggested some acts of contrition. The poor prince repeated distinctly several words suggested to him, and confusedly answered others, struck his breast, squeezed the curé's hand, appeared penetrated with the best sentiments, and received with a contrite and willing air the absolution of the curé. The king, as he rose from the supper-table, well-nigh fell backward, when Fagon, coming forward, cried in great trouble that all was lost. It may be imagined what terror seized all the company at this abrupt passage from perfect security to hopeless despair. The king, scarcely master of himself, at once began to go toward the apartment of Monseigneur, and repelled very stiffly the indiscreet eagerness of some courtiers who wished to prevent him, saying that he would see his son again, and be quite certain that nothing could be done. As he was about to enter the chamber, Mme. la Princesse de Conti presented herself before him, and prevented him from going in. She pushed him back with her hands, and said that henceforth he had only to think of himself. Then the king, nearly fainting from a shock so complete and so sudden, fell upon a sofa that stood near. He asked unceasingly for news from all who passed, but scarcely anybody dared to reply to him. He had sent for Père Tellier, who went into Monseigneur's room; but it was

no longer time. It is true that the Jesuit, perhaps to console the king, said he gave the prince a well-founded absolution. Madame de Maintenon hastened after the king, and sitting down beside him on the same sofa, tried to cry. She endeavored to lead away the king to the carriage already waiting for him in the courtyard, but he would not go, and sat thus outside the door until Monseigneur had expired. The agony, without consciousness, of Monseigneur lasted more than an hour after the king had come into the cabinet. Mme. la Duchesse and Mme. la Princesse de Conti divided their cares between the dying man and the king, to whom they constantly came back; while the doctors confounded, the valets bewildered, the courtiers hurrying and murmuring, hustled against one another, and moved unceasingly to and fro, backward and forward, in the same narrow space. At last the fatal moment arrived. Fagon came out, and allowed as much to be understood. The king, much afflicted, and very grieved that Monseigneur's confession had been so tardily made, abused Fagon a little, and went away, led by Madame de Maintenon, Mme. la Duchesse, and the Princesse de Conti. He was somewhat struck by finding the coach of Monseigneur outside, and made a sign that he would have another coach, for that one made him suffer, and left the château. He was not, however, so much occupied with his grief that he could not call Pontchartrain to arrange the hour of the council for the next day. I will not comment on this coolness, and shall merely say it surprised extremely all present, and that if Pontchartrain had not said the council could be put off, no interruption to business would have taken place. The king got into his coach with difficulty, supported on both sides. Madame de Maintenon seated herself beside him. A crowd of officers of Monseigneur lined both sides of the court on their knees, as he passed out, crying to him with strange howlings to have compassion on them, for they had lost all,

and must die of hunger. Horror reigned at Meudon. As soon as the king had left, all the courtiers left also, crowding into the first carriages that came. In an instant Meudon was empty. Mlle. de Chouin remained alone in her apartment, and unaware of what had taken place. She learned it only by the cry raised. Nobody thought of telling her. At last some friends went up to her, hurried her into a hired coach, and took her to Paris. The dispersion was general. One or two valets, at the most, remained near the body. La Vrillière, to his praise be it said, was the only courtier who, not having abandoned Monseigneur during life, did not abandon him after his death. He had some difficulty to find somebody to go in search of Capuchins to pray over the corpse. The decomposition became so rapid and so great that the opening of the windows was not enough. The Capuchins, La Vrillière, and the valets were compelled to pass the night outside.

" While Meudon was filled with horror, all was tranquil at Versailles, without the least suspicion. We had supped. The company some time after had retired, and I was talking with Madame de Saint-Simon, who had nearly finished undressing herself to go to bed, when a servant of Mme. la Duchesse de Berry, who had formerly belonged to us, entered, all terrified. He said that there must be some bad news from Meudon, since M. le Duc de Bourgogne had just whispered in the ear of M. le Duc de Berry, whose eyes had at once become red, that he left the table, and that all the company shortly after him rose with precipitation. So sudden a change rendered my surprise extreme. I ran in hot haste to the apartments of Mme. la Duchesse de Berry. Nobody was there. Everybody had gone to Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne. I followed on with all speed. I found all Versailles assembled on arriving, all the ladies hastily dressed, the majority having been on the point of going to bed, all doors open, and all in trouble. I learned that Monseigneur had received the

extreme unction, that he was without consciousness and beyond hope, and that the king had sent word to Madame de Bourgogne that he was going to Marly, and that she was to meet him as he passed through the avenue between the royal stables.

" The spectacle before me attracted all the attention I could bestow. M. le Duc de Bourgogne, M. le Duc de Berry, the Duchesse de Bourgogne, and the Duchesse de Berry were in the little cabinet behind the bedchamber of the Duchesse de Bourgogne. The bed-toilet was as usual in the chamber, which was filled with all the court in confusion. The Duchesse de Bourgogne came and went from the cabinet to the chamber, waiting for the moment when she was to meet the king, and her demeanor, always distinguished by the same graces, was one of trouble and compassion, which the trouble and compassion of others induced them to take for grief. Now and then, in passing, she said a few rare words. All present were in truth expressive personages. Whoever had eyes, without any knowledge of the court, could see the interests of all interested painted on their faces, and the indifference of the indifferent; these tranquil, the former penetrated with grief, or gravely attentive to themselves to hide their emancipation and their joy. For my part, my first care was to inform myself thoroughly of the state of affairs, fearing lest there might be too much alarm for too trifling a cause; then, recovering myself, I reflected upon the misery common to all men, and that I myself should find myself some day at the gates of death. Joy, nevertheless, found its way through the momentary reflections of religion and humanity by which I tried to master myself. My own private deliverance seemed so great and so unhoped for that it appeared to me that the state must gain everything by such a loss; and with these thoughts I felt, in spite of myself, a lingering fear lest the sick man should recover, and was extremely ashamed of it.

The Vestibule, Trianon

Wrapped up thus in myself, I did not fail, however, to cast clandestine looks upon each face, to see what was passing there. I saw Mme. la Duchesse d'Orléans arrive, but her countenance, majestic and constrained, said nothing. She went into the little cabinet, from which she presently issued with the Duc d'Orléans, whose activity and turbulent air marked his emotion at the spectacle more than any other sentiment. They went away, and I notice this expressly on account of what happened afterward in my presence. Soon I caught a distant glimpse of the Duc de Bourgogne, who seemed much moved and troubled, but the glance with which I probed him rapidly revealed nothing tender, and told merely of a mind profoundly occupied with the bearings of what had taken place. Valets and *femmes de chambre* were already indiscreetly crying out, and their grief showed well that they were about to lose something. A little after midnight we had news of the king, and immediately after the Duchesse de Bourgogne came out of the little cabinet with the duke, who seemed more touched than when I first saw him. The duchess took her scarf and her coif from the toilet, standing with a deliberate air, her eyes scarcely wet, a fact betrayed by inquisitive glances cast rapidly to the right and left, and, followed only by her ladies, she went to her coach by the grand staircase.

"I took this opportunity to go to the apartments of the Duchesse d'Orléans, where I found many people. Their presence made me very impatient, and the duchess, who was equally impatient, took a light and went into her cabinet. I whispered in the ear of the Duchesse de Villeroi, who thought as I thought of this event. She nudged me, and said in a very low voice that I must contain myself. I was smothered with silence, amid the complaints and the naïve surprises of these ladies. At last the Duc d'Orléans appeared at the door of his cabinet, and beckoned me to come to him. I fol-

lowed him into the cabinet, where we were alone. What was my surprise, remembering the terms on which he was with Monseigneur, to see tears streaming from his eyes. 'Monsieur!' I exclaimed, rising. He understood me at once, and answered in a broken voice, really crying: 'You are right to be surprised. I am surprised myself. But such a spectacle touches. He was a man with whom I passed much of my life, and who treated me well when he was uninfluenced. I feel very well that my grief won't last long; in a few days I shall discover motives of joy; but at present, blood, relationship, humanity, all work, and my entrails are moved.' I praised his sentiments, but repeated my surprise. He rose, thrust his head into a corner, and, with his nose there, wept bitterly and sobbed, which if I had not seen, I could not have believed. After a little silence, I exhorted him to calm himself. I represented to him that, everybody knowing on what terms he had been with Monseigneur, he would be laughed at, as playing a part, if his eyes showed that he had been weeping. He did what he could to remove the marks of his tears, and then we went back into the other room.

"The interview of the Duchesse de Bourgogne with the king had not been long. She met him in the avenue between the royal stables, got down, and went to the door of the carriage. Madame de Maintenon cried out, 'Where are you going? We bear the plague about with us.' I do not know what the king said or did. The Duchesse de Bourgogne returned to her carriage, and came back to the château, bringing in reality the first news of the actual death of Monseigneur. At Marly everybody felt hopeful, and the king's return there was not dreamed of. Nothing was ready, no keys of the apartments, no fires, scarcely any candles. The king was more than an hour thus with Madame de Maintenon and other ladies in one of the antechambers. The king retired into a corner, seated between Madame de Maintenon

and two other ladies, and wept at long intervals. At last the chamber of Madame de Maintenon was ready. The king entered, remained there an hour, and then went to bed in his apartment at nearly four o'clock in the morning.

" At the return of the Duchesse de Bourgogne, acting upon the advice of M. de Beauvilliers, all the company had gone into the grand salon.[1] The Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne and the Duc and Duchesse de Berry were there, seated on one sofa; all the rest of the company were scattered about in confusion, seated or standing, some of the ladies being on the floor near the sofa. There could be no doubt of what had happened; it was plainly written on every face. Monseigneur was no more. It was known; it was spoken of; constraint with respect to him no longer existed. Amid the surprise, the confusion, and the movements that prevailed, the sentiments of all were painted to the life in looks and gestures. In the adjoining apartments were heard the constrained groans and sighs of the valets, grieving for the master they had lost. Further on began the crowd of courtiers of all kinds. The greater number, that is to say the fools, pumped up sighs as well as they could, and with wandering but dry eyes sang the praises of Monseigneur, insisting especially on his goodness. They pitied the king for the loss of so good a son. The keener began already to be uneasy about the health of the king, and admired themselves for preserving so much judgment amid so much trouble, which could be perceived by the frequency of their repetitions. Others, really afflicted, the discomfited cabal, wept bitterly, and kept themselves under with an effort as easy to notice as sobs. The most strong-minded or the wisest, with eyes fixed on the ground, in corners, meditated on the consequences of such an event, and especially on their own interests. Few words passed in conversation; here and there an exclamation wrung from

[1] The salon of Peace.

grief was answered by some neighboring grief, a word every quarter of an hour, somber and haggard eyes, movements quite involuntary of the hands, immobility of all other parts of the body. Those who already looked upon the event as favorable in vain exaggerated their gravity, so as to make it resemble chagrin and severity; the veil over their faces was transparent and hid not a single feature. They remained as motionless as those who grieved most, fearing opinion, curiosity, their own satisfaction, their every movement; but their eyes made up for their immobility. Indeed, they could not refrain from repeatedly changing their attitudes, like people ill at ease, sitting or standing, from avoiding each other too carefully, even from allowing their eyes to meet, nor repress a manifest air of liberty, nor conceal their increased liveliness, nor put out a sort of brilliancy which distinguished them in spite of themselves. It must be admitted that for him who is well acquainted with the privacies of a court the first sight of rare events of this nature, interesting in so many different respects, is extremely satisfactory. Every countenance reveals the cares, the intrigues, the labors employed in the advancement of fortunes, in the overthrow of rivals; the relations, the coldness, the hatreds, the evil offices done, the baseness of all, hope, despair, rage, satisfaction, express themselves in the features. See how all eyes wander to and fro, examining what passes around, how some are astonished to find others more mean, or less mean, than was expected. Thus this spectacle produced a pleasure which, hollow as it may be, is one of the greatest a court can bestow.

"The Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne and the Duc and Duchesse de Berry were more exposed to view than any others. The Duc de Bourgogne wept with tenderness, sincerity, gentleness, the tears of nature, religion, and patience. The Duc de Berry also sincerely shed abundance of tears, but bloody tears so to speak, so great appeared their bitterness,

and he uttered not only sobs, but cries, nay, even yells. He was silent sometimes, but from suffocation, and then would burst out again with such a noise, such a trumpet sound of despair, that the majority present burst out also at these dolorous repetitions, either impelled by affliction or decorum. Mme. la Duchesse de Berry was beside herself; there was seen written, as it were, a sort of furious grief, based on interest, not affection; now and then came dry lulls, deep and sullen, then a torrent of tears. Often aroused by the cries of her husband, prompt to assist him, to support him, to embrace him, to give him her smelling-bottle, her care for him was evident. As for the Duchesse de Bourgogne, she consoled her husband with less trouble than she had to appear herself in want of consolation. Without attempting to play a part, it was evident that she did her best to acquit herself of a pressing duty of decorum; but she found extreme difficulty in keeping up appearances. When her brother-in-law howled, she blew her nose. She had brought some tears along with her, and kept them with care, and these, combined with the art of the handkerchief, enabled her to redden her eyes and make them swell, and smudge her face; but her glances often wandered on the sly to the countenances of all present. Madame[1] arrived, in full dress she knew not why, and howling she knew not why, inundated everybody with her tears in embracing them, making the château echo with renewed cries, and furnished the odd spectacle of a princess putting on her robes of ceremony in the dead of night to come and cry among a crowd of women with but little on except their night-dresses, almost as masqueraders.

"In the gallery, several ladies, Mme. la Duchesse d'Orléans, Madame de Castries, and Madame de Saint-Simon among the rest, finding no one close by, drew near one another by the side of a tent-bedstead, and began to open their hearts

[1] The dowager Duchesse d'Orléans, widow of Monsieur.

to one another, which they did with the more freedom, inasmuch as they had but one sentiment in common upon what had occurred. In the gallery and its salons there were always during the night several beds, in which, for security's sake, certain Swiss guards slept. These beds had been put in their usual places this evening before the bad news came from Meudon. In the midst of the conversation of the ladies, Madame de Castries touched the bed, felt something move, and was much terrified. A moment after they saw a sturdy arm, nearly naked, raise the curtains on a sudden, and thus show them a great brawny Swiss under the sheets, half awake and wholly amazed. The fellow was a long time in making out his position, fixing his eyes upon every face, one after another; but at last, not judging it advisable to get up in the midst of such a grand company, he reburied himself in his bed and closed the curtains. Apparently the guard had gone to bed before anything had transpired, and had slept so soundly ever since that he had not been aroused till then. The saddest sights have often the most ridiculous contrasts. This caused some of the ladies to laugh, and made Madame d'Orléans fear lest the conversation might have been overheard; but, after reflection, the sleep and the stupidity of the sleeper reassured her. The turmoil in the grand salon and the gallery lasted about an hour, at the end of which M. de Beauvilliers thought it was high time to deliver the princes of their company. The apartments were cleared.

"The first night at Versailles after the death of Monseigneur was sleepless. The Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne heard mass early next morning. The duchess wished to be at Marly at the king's waking. I went to see them. Few persons were present on account of the hour. Their eyes were wonderfully dry, but carefully managed. It was easy to see they were more occupied with their new position than with the death of Monseigneur. At Marly, the morning after

the death of Monseigneur, the king rose late, called M. de Beauvilliers into his cabinet, shed some more tears, and then said that from that time Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne and Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne were to enjoy the honors, the rank, and the names of Dauphin and Dauphine." [1]

In the night of Wednesday, the 15th of April, some twenty-four hours after his death, the remains of Monseigneur were taken from Meudon to St. Denis, and placed in the royal vaults. There was little ceremony, and aside from the persons on duty, none of the courtiers attended. On the 18th of the following June, 1711, the solemn obsequies took place at St. Denis, and on July 3d at Nôtre Dame de Paris.

[1] Saint-Simon, II, pp. 172–191.

III

THE DUC AND DUCHESSE DE BOURGOGNE

WITH the exception of Monseigneur, the children of Louis XIV and Marie Thérèse died young. At court the three sons of Monseigneur ranked as *Enfants de France.* "One must have guessed that the children belonged to him," says the Palatine, "for he lived like a stranger among them. He never called them his sons, but the Duc de Bourgogne, the Duc d'Anjou, the Duc de Berry; and they, in turn, always called him Monseigneur." In 1690 they lost their mother, the Dauphine of Bavaria. The Duc de Bourgogne was then eight years old, the Duc d'Anjou seven, and the Duc de Berry four. Up to the age of seven they were under the control of their governess, the Maréchale de la Mothe; then they passed into the hands of governors, tutors, and valets. They saw their father, as a rule, on state occasions.

LOUIS OF FRANCE, DUC DE BOURGOGNE

IN 1682 the Dauphine of Bavaria occupied apartments at the end of the south wing of the château, and there, on the 6th of August of that year, the Duc de Bourgogne was born. The *Mercure* gives in detail the anxiety and the joy which attended the coming of this first grandson of the King of France.

"On Tuesday, the 4th of August, Mme. la Dauphine began to feel some pain. It was late, and she preferred to suffer without complaining than to force all the court to pass the night without sleep. But at one o'clock in the morning her pains increased, and the rumor was spread abroad. Monseigneur remained in her chamber throughout the night. All Versailles learned the news. Judge of the agitation in a court as large as that of France. All was in motion. The princes and princesses of the blood, who had not yet gone to bed, came at once to the apartments of Mme. la Dauphine; the others were awakened, and came shortly after. Couriers were despatched to summon those who had gone to Paris. Relays of horses were sent out on the road. It was as light as day in the château, owing to the quantity of torches carried for those who were going and coming. All the court was aroused by the noise in the antechambers and in the gallery.

"As it appeared that Mme. la Dauphine would not be delivered immediately, they did not wish to wake the king, but at five in the morning it was thought proper to inform him of the state of the princess. He rose at once, but in place of hastening to her apartments and appearing alarmed, he displayed his customary prudence and moderation. He thought that, at a time when prayers were necessary to call down the grace of Heaven, the first thing that ought to be done was to hear mass. He had it said, and about six in the morning he went to see in what state affairs were. The crowd increased at every moment, and those for whom the couriers had been sent arrived constantly. One could have said that all the court, and all the nobility of France, surrounded the apartment of Mme. la Dauphine; it was impossible to approach; the rest of the château appeared deserted. At nine o'clock the king, seeing that the pains of Mme. la Dauphine were very slight, left her chamber to go to the council. The majority

of the princes and princesses had been up all night, and although a large number of people of rank retired, others came constantly, so that the crush continued, and the crowd seemed even larger than before. . . . At the end of the afternoon Mme. la Dauphine experienced violent pains. The king was informed, and came at once. The greater part of the ambassadors, envoys, and foreign princes, having learned of what was taking place, had come to Versailles to learn the news of the birth the moment it should be announced, and inform their sovereigns the same hour. The road was more and more crowded with those who were going and coming between Paris and Versailles. There were couriers and carriages everywhere. The same thing was seen for some time after the birth of Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne, since all people of quality came to testify their joy to Their Majesties. . . . The queen and the princesses of the blood tried constantly to render to Mme. la Dauphine all the services that women can give on such an occasion. The king and Monseigneur forgot nothing on their side. As her pains did not cease, they passed the night there without undressing. Nothing could be more tender than the king's attitude toward the princess. . . . While Mme. la Dauphine suffered most, she said to the king that, after having known so good a father and so good a husband, it would be hard for her to leave them. The king encouraged her, and told her he would be content to have a girl, provided she might suffer less and be soon delivered. . . . On Thursday morning the king went to mass, and although he had been up all night, he did not omit to hold his council as usual. He had spent two days and almost two nights between his prayers, his duties of state, and his tenderness for Mme. la Dauphine. . . .

"Although the chamber was filled with the princes and princesses of the blood, and a large number of other people whose presence was necessary for the service, the king, judg-

ing that the moment of the delivery was near, and with that presence of mind which never fails him, saw at a glance, in spite of the number of persons crowded in the chamber, that M. le Prince de Conti was not there. He gave orders that he should be summoned immediately. There were then in the chamber the king, the queen, Mgr. le Dauphin, Monsieur, Madame, Mlle. d'Orléans, and all the princes and princesses of the blood whose rank gave them the right to be present. There were also many ladies of the palace whose posts gave them the privilege, or who were in the service of Mme. la Dauphine. Although no one moved, each one appeared restless. A low murmur was heard in all parts of the chamber. Anxiety mingled with joy reigned. Meanwhile the severe pains of the delivery redoubled. People became alarmed. M. Clément, who had come to deliver the princess, had need to be more alarmed than they, for her and for himself. The presence of the king might have intimidated him, and the fear of doing his work badly might have prevented him from accomplishing it; but none of these things made any impression on him. He forgot both the place where he was, and the rank of the person whom he attended, and he acquitted himself so well that the king said afterward that he noticed that Clément was cool. While all were attentive, Mme. la Dauphine was delivered at quarter past ten in the evening.

" The king, who feared that, if Mme. la Dauphine were delivered of a prince and informed of it at once, the excess of her joy would be dangerous for her, had arranged with Clément some words by which His Majesty was to be informed of the sex of the child. Clément pronounced them, but the tone of his voice and his eyes betrayed him. Monsieur comprehended the ruse. He said at once what he had discovered. His Majesty immediately announced the news, and named the prince Duc de Bourgogne.

" The excitement which followed can hardly be described.

Those who were in the chamber neither knew what they said nor what they did, and under such circumstances they could not relate what others did. Two doors were opened at the same time to announce the grand news. The king opened one, and said to the princesses, duchesses, and ladies of the palace, 'It is a prince!' At the same time a lady of honor informed the noblemen who were in the other antechamber. The shouts which followed, and the commotion, were tremendous. Some broke through the crowd to spread the news on every side; others, without knowing exactly where they were or what they did, were transported. There were tears of joy, animosities were forgotten, people embraced those nearest them, without distinction of rank. Many valets found themselves, without knowing how they got there, in the antechamber with the princes and the ladies of the palace. . . . Nothing could equal the zeal and activity of M. d'Ormoy. He traversed the antechambers, he ran up and down the staircases, shouting everywhere that it was a prince, and he shouted so much that for some time afterward he could hardly speak. . . . Finally, after so much anxiety, fatigue, alarm, and joy, it was time to leave Mme. la Dauphine in repose. On leaving her chamber, the king had to encounter transports of joy to which a prince less affable than the king could not easily have adjusted himself. He had to pass through the midst of all those who formed the court of France, great lords and others, and the joy of the crowd was such that they all tried to throw themselves at his feet and embrace his knees. Those who at another time would not have dared to approach so near, now, animated by an excess of joy, threw themselves with the rest. Whatever inconvenience the king may have suffered, he bore all with an air so affable that the boldness of those who might have been timid was increased. In fact, the king was carried from the apartments of Mme. la Dauphine to the antechamber of the queen, where he supped.

Louis of France, Duc de Bourgogne

"A guard of the king, sleeping on his straw mattress, was aroused by the tumult, and having learned the cause, he took his mattress on his back and ran at once to the first courtyard, where he set the mattress on fire. Other soldiers followed his example, bringing in their zeal whatever they could lay hands on, benches and tables even. . . . The king, who saw in passing this agreeable disorder, said, 'Let them do what they like, provided they do not burn us.'"

In spite of the mediocrity of his parents, the Duc de Bourgogne had intellect; perhaps he got that from his grandfather. At any rate, he had it, but for a time it seemed that nothing would come of it.

In his youth he was "impetuous with frenzy; passionately fond of all kinds of voluptuousness, of women, of wine, good living, hunting, music, gambling, in which last he could not endure to be beaten; in fine, abandoned to every passion, and transported by every pleasure. He looked down upon all men as from the sky, as atoms with whom he had nothing in common; even his brothers scarcely appeared connecting-links between himself and human nature, although all three had been educated together in perfect equality."[1] Up to the age of fifteen, when he was married to Marie Adelaide of Savoy, he gave every indication of becoming the worst of the Bourbons.

His intelligence, and the teaching of Fénelon, saved him. "God, who is master of all hearts," says Saint-Simon, "worked a miracle in this prince between his eighteenth and twentieth years. From the abyss he came out affable, gentle, moderate, penitent, and humble, austere even, more than harmonized with his position." In fact the pendulum swung so far the other way that, for a time, he was sanctimonious and absurd. "On one occasion he refused to be present at a ball on Twelfth-Night, and in various ways made himself ridiculous at court." But he righted himself at last, and when,

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 218.

in 1711, he became Dauphin of France, he had run the gantlet at the two extremes of profligacy and piety, he had found his poise, he had struck his gait, and he was working in earnest to fit himself for kingship. "He applied himself to the studies which were necessary in order to instruct himself in public affairs. . . . He tried to fathom men, to draw from them the instruction and light he could hope for. . . . He was without verbiage, compliments, prefaces, or other hindrances; he went straight to the point, and allowed you to go also. . . . He became on a sudden easy and frank, showing himself in public on all occasions, conversing right and left in a gay, agreeable, and dignified manner, presiding, in fact, over the salon of Marly. In a short time hunting became a less usual topic of conversation; history and even science were touched upon lightly, in a manner that charmed while it instructed. The dauphin spoke with an eloquent freedom that opened all eyes and hearts. It is astonishing with what rapidity he gained universal esteem and admiration. The public joy could not keep silent. People asked each other if this was really the same man they had known as Duc de Bourgogne. . . . The king wished to give him 50,000 livres a month, Monseigneur having had that sum. He would not accept them. He had 6000 livres a month; he was satisfied with double that amount, and would not receive more. This disinterestedness much pleased the public. He wished for nothing special on his account, and persisted in remaining in nearly everything as he was during the life of Monseigneur. These auguries of a prudent reign suggested the brightest of hopes."

It was the Duc de Bourgogne who dared to say openly in the salon of Marly, "The king is made for his subjects, not the subjects for the king." Fate never gave him an opportunity to put those words in practice, and with him perished the best hope for the future of the House of Bourbon.

THE DUCHESSE DE BOURGOGNE

Of all the women of the court the Duchesse de Bourgogne seems to have had the most charming disposition and the most lovable nature. She stands in a place apart. In 1696 the King of France asked the Duke of Savoy for the hand of his daughter, Marie Adelaide, on behalf of Louis, Duc de Bourgogne. The Princess of Savoy was then a child of eleven years; the Duc de Bourgogne was a boy of fourteen. By the terms of the compact made with the Duke of Savoy, the princess was to be married when she had completed her twelfth year. Marriages of children of rank were not uncommon, but for several years after such marriages the contracting parties were not allowed to live together. Louis XIV went in state to Montargis to meet the future granddaughter-in-law, who for the next fifteen years was to play so important a part in his life. He met her on Sunday, the 4th of November, and the letter he wrote to Madame de Maintenon on that day is interesting, not only because the king himself gives his first impressions, but also because the person in question was a child of eleven years.

"I arrived here (Montargis) before five o'clock," says the king. "The princess did not come till nearly six. I went to receive her at her carriage. She let me speak first, and afterward she replied extremely well, but with a little embarrassment that would have pleased you. I led her to her room through the crowd, letting her be seen from time to time by making the torches come nearer to her face. She bore that march and the lights with grace and modesty. At last we reached her room, where there was a crowd and heat enough to kill us. I showed her now and then to those who approached us, and considered her in every way in order to write you what I think of her. She has the best grace and the prettiest figure I have ever seen. Dressed for a painter, and

hair the same; eyes very bright and very beautiful, the lashes black and admirable; complexion very even, white and red, all that one could wish; the finest blond hair that was ever seen, and in great quantity. She is thin, but that belongs to her years. Her mouth is rosy; the lips full; the teeth white, long, and ill placed; her hands well shaped, but of the color of her age. She speaks little, as far as I have seen, and is not embarrassed when looked at, like a person who has seen the world. She curtsies badly, with rather an Italian air; she has also something of an Italian in her face. But she pleases; I saw that in the eyes of those present. As for me, I am wholly satisfied. She resembles her first portrait, not the second. To speak to you as I always do, I must tell you that I find her all that could be wished. I should be sorry if she were handsomer. We supped, and she did not fail in anything, and had a charming politeness to every one. To me and to my son she behaved as you might have done. Her air is noble; her manners polished and agreeable. I have pleasure in telling you such good of her, for I find that without prepossession or flattery I can do so, and everything obliges me to do so."

When one considers who the writer of this letter was, and his standards of etiquette, such praise of so young a girl is astonishing, and speaks volumes for her home training.

The little Princess of Savoy was established at Versailles, and the impression she made on Madame de Maintenon was not less favorable than that she had made on the king. "Her cajoleries," says Saint-Simon, "soon bewitched Madame de Maintenon, whom she called her 'aunt,' and whom she treated with a respect, and yet with a freedom, that ravished everybody. She became the doll of Madame de Maintenon and the king, pleased them infinitely by her insinuating spirit, and took greater liberties with them than the children of the king had ever dared to attempt."

On the 6th of December, 1697, the princess completed her twelfth year, and on the following day she became Duchesse de Bourgogne. "The marriage was fixed for Saturday, the 7th of December, and to avoid disputes and difficulties, the king suppressed all ceremonies. At an early hour all the court went to Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne, who went afterward to the princess. A little before midday the procession started from the grand salon [1] and proceeded to the chapel. Cardinal de Coislin performed the marriage service. As soon as the ceremony was finished, a courier, ready at the door of the chapel, started for Turin. The King and Queen of England came about seven o'clock in the evening, and some time afterward supper was served. Upon rising from table, the Duchesse de Bourgogne was shown to her bed, none but ladies being allowed to remain in the chamber. Her chemise was given her by the Queen of England, through the Duchesse de Lude. The Duc de Bourgogne undressed in another room, in the midst of all the court, seated upon a folding-chair. The King of England gave him his shirt, which was presented by the Duc de Beauvilliers. As soon as the Duchesse de Bourgogne was in bed, the duke entered, and placed himself at her side, in the presence of all the court. Immediately afterward everybody went away from the nuptial chamber, except Monseigneur, the ladies of the Duchesse de Bourgogne, and the Duc de Beauvilliers, who remained at the pillow by the side of his pupil, with the Duchesse de Lude on the other side. Monseigneur stopped a quarter of an hour talking with the newly married couple, and then made his son get up, after having told him to kiss the princess, in spite of the opposition of the Duchesse de Lude. As it proved, too, her opposition was not wrong. The king had said he did not wish that his grandson should kiss the end of the princess's finger until they were completely on the footing of man and

[1] The salon of Peace.

wife. The young couple were not, indeed, allowed to live together as man and wife until two years afterward. The Duc de Bourgogne redressed himself in the antechamber, and went to his own bed as usual. The Duchesse de Bourgogne continued to live just as before, and her ladies had strict orders never to leave her alone with her husband. . . . The marriage-fêtes spread over several days. On Sunday there was an assembly in the apartments of the new Duchesse de Bourgogne. It was magnificent by the prodigious number of ladies seated in a circle, or standing behind the stools, gentlemen in turn behind them, and the dresses of all beautiful. It commenced at six o'clock. The king came at the end, and led all the ladies into the salon [1] near the chapel, where there was a fine collation and the music. At nine o'clock he conducted the Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne to the apartment of the latter, and all was finished for the day. . . . On Wednesday there was a grand ball in the gallery, superbly ornamented for the occasion. There was such a crowd, and such disorder, that even the king was inconvenienced, and Monsieur was pushed and knocked about in the crush. How other people fared may be imagined. No place was kept, strength or chance decided everything, people squeezed in where they could. This spoiled all the fête. . . . On the following Sunday there was another ball, but this time matters were so arranged that no crowding or inconvenience occurred. The ball commenced at seven o'clock, and was admirable. Everybody appeared in dresses that had not previously been seen. The king found that of Madame de Saint-Simon much to his taste, and gave it the palm over all the others. Madame de Maintenon did not appear at these balls, at least only for half an hour at each. On the following Tuesday all the court went at four o'clock in the afternoon to Trianon, where all gambled until the arrival of the King and Queen of Eng-

[1] The salon of Mars.

land. The king took them into the theater, where Destouches's opera of *Issé* was very well performed. The opera being finished, everybody went his way, and thus these marriage-fêtes were brought to an end." [1]

But the life of the Duchesse de Bourgogne had just begun. For fifteen years she was to be the pet of the court and the joy of the king. Never since he entered the world had the Grand Monarch been on anything like familiar terms with another human being; even in his love-making days he had never failed to be the king. But now in private with this amiable and lovable child, Sun King and Grand Monarch vanished, and Louis was a man and a grandfather. "In private, she clasped the king round the neck at all hours, jumped upon his knees, tormented him with all sorts of sportiveness, rummaged among his papers, opened his letters and read them in his presence, sometimes in spite of him, and acted in the same manner with Madame de Maintenon. Despite this extreme liberty, she never spoke against any one; gracious to all, she endeavored to ward off blows from all whenever she could; was attentive to all the private comforts of the king, even the humblest; kind to all who served, and living with her ladies, as with friends, in complete liberty, old and young; she was the darling of the court, adored by all; everybody missed her when she was away; when she reappeared the void was filled up; everybody, great and small, was anxious to please her; in a word, she had attached all hearts to herself. . . . The king really could not do without her. Everything went wrong with him if she was not by; even at his public supper, if she were away, an additional cloud of seriousness and silence settled around him. She took great care to see him every day upon arriving and departing, and if some ball in winter, or some pleasure-party in summer, made her lose half the night, she nevertheless ad-

[1] Saint-Simon, I, pp. 106–108.

justed things so well that she went and embraced the king the moment he was up, and amused him with a description of the fête."

The year after her marriage (1698), the king made the Duchesse de Bourgogne a splendid present, nothing less than the Menagerie of Versailles, with its handsome château, courts, animals, birds, and gardens. The young duchess was full of joy. "They are working on my menagerie," she wrote to her grandmother (July 2, 1698). "The king has ordered Mansart to spare nothing. Imagine, my dear grandmama, what it will be! But I shall only see it on my return from Fontainebleau. It is true the king's kindnesses to me are wonderful; but, also, I love him well." The duchess took delight in her little domain, supped there frequently with her ladies, and amused herself much. She went to see the cows milked, and in her dairy she made butter herself, which was served to the king at table, and which His Majesty pronounced excellent. In March, 1703, the king came to see the improvements made at the Menagerie, in company with the Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne and the Duc du Maine. In the following year the duchess received there Madame de Maintenon and the Duke of Mantua, and in 1705 the Prince of England, his sister, and the ladies of the court at St. Germain. The Duc de Bourgogne and the Duc de Berry came constantly, and in summer the king supped there frequently with the duchess and her ladies. She amused herself greatly. She fished in the grand canal, gave picnics and suppers, played cards and danced in her château, and took donkey-rides in the park. When she was permitted to mount a horse in 1707, she was overjoyed. On the 13th of June of that year, she gave a riding party, consisting of four of her ladies, her brother-in-law, the Duc de Berry, her husband, and herself. They went at a gallop to Bretêche, and on the return Mme. de Lorges had a rude fall. There were new

Marie Adelaide, Duchesse de Bourgogne

riding parties at once, and the duchess and her ladies, who do not seem to have been sure of themselves, tried mounting astride, man-fashion, to hold on better. They learned, however, and on the 29th of August, 1707, went, in grand cavalcade, to Chaville to sup with Monseigneur, the Princesse de Conti, and Mme. la Duchesse.

But Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne had not been brought from Savoy to France to make butter or to ride horseback, but to give heirs to the crown. On the 25th of June, 1704, she did her duty bravely, and with all ceremony, in the queen's state bedchamber at Versailles. The *Mercure Galant* gives the following account of the birth of her first child, the Duc de Bretagne:

"On the 25th of June, Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne commenced to feel some pains, which increased a little toward noon, became stronger at half-past one, and from three o'clock until shortly after five, when the princess was delivered, were very strong and very frequent. She had had one about three o'clock which caused her to cry aloud, so that some people thought she was delivered. One of the valets of the Chamber, having heard M. Clément, the accoucheur, pronounce distinctly these words, 'I have it,' thought that he spoke of a prince that he was persuaded the princess was about to give birth to. M. Clément, however, spoke only of a cushion that he had asked for. The valet of the Chamber, excited by his zeal, ran to the little apartment of the Duc de Bourgogne, where the duke had determined to remain while the duchess was in labor, and told him that Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne had been delivered of a prince. In an instant all the apartments of the Duchesse de Bourgogne were filled with a crowd, brought together by this great news, which at the same time spread all over Versailles, where they lighted a quantity of fire. Orders were sent at once to stop the illumination, but it was too late to stop many couriers who had

been despatched to Paris with the good news. Before the Duc de Bourgogne was undeceived, the Duc d'Albe, the ambassador of Spain, threw himself at the feet of that prince, for whom he had particular respect, and said to him, embracing his knees, that after the joy he had in seeing him a father nothing would be wanting to his happiness if he could see his master, the King of Spain,[1] a father also. The Duc de Bourgogne replied: 'I know, monsieur, that your joy responds to mine. This is a happy day for both of us. I hope for one of the same sort for the King of Spain.' He learned at that moment that his joy was premature, which gave him grief; but all was forgotten at five o'clock, when Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne was delivered after having borne her pains with wonderful courage. The king remained constantly by her side, with Monseigneur, and all the princes and princesses. M. Clément was somewhat troubled when the Duchesse de Bourgogne was delivered, because the child did not cry; and for some moments there was silence. The king whispered in M. Clément's ear and asked what the child's sex was. He answered in a low tone that it was a boy. The king asked if he could declare it. Mme. de Bourgogne, who was watching the king, spoke, and said that she knew from His Majesty's expression of face that it was a boy. The fact was immediately announced aloud in the chamber. The king then said, 'This is the fourteenth Clément has given me.' To which Clément answered that he hoped to give him other children in the future. M. le Duc de Berry announced the news to the Duc de Bourgogne, and embraced him. The Papal Nuncio was the first foreign minister who entered, and was the first to compliment His Majesty upon this happy birth. The Duc and Duchesse d'Albe then entered; the duke said to the king that the good fortune of France was a happiness for Spain, and that personally nothing touched him more

[1] Philippe V, brother of the Duc de Bourgogne.

than to see the king a great-grandfather, Monseigneur a grandfather, and the Duc de Bourgogne a father. The king replied that he thanked him for his sentiments, that he knew they were sincere, and that he was persuaded that this good fortune would be celebrated in Spain. The king then went to the door of the bedchamber, and announced the news to the courtiers who filled the grand cabinet, and received their congratulations. He told them that he had given the infant the name of Duc de Bretagne.

"Meanwhile the young prince had been placed in a swaddling-cloth, and given to Mme. la Maréchale de la Mothe, who carried him near the fire. He was baptized at once by the Cardinal de Coislin, in the presence of the curé of Versailles; after which he was wrapped in his swaddling-clothes by a guard of the Duchesse de Bourgogne. The prince seemed healthy and strong. The Maréchale de la Mothe carried him then to the Duc de Bourgogne, who kissed him. Afterward she carried him to the door of the bedchamber, where were the sedan-chair and porters of the king. She entered the chair, and held the prince on her knees; the Maréchal de Noailles conducted him; and he was borne thus through the apartments to the room prepared for him. Later the king sent him the blue ribbon and the cross of the Order of St. Esprit. . . . Then His Majesty said that he must go to thank God for this grace, and went to chapel with the Duc de Bourgogne. They remained there in prayer three quarters of an hour. On coming out of chapel the king held his council with his ministers, for His Majesty never postpones the business of the state."

But, to the great grief of the duchess, this boy, whose birth caused so much rejoicing, died in the following year. On the 8th of January, 1707, a second son was born, who also took the title Duc de Bretagne. He died in 1712, some few weeks after his mother and father. Her third son, who was to live

and reign as Louis XV, saw the light on the 15th of February, 1710. It was of him that the Duchesse de Bourgogne wrote to her grandmother on the 24th of March of that year: "I was most agreeably mistaken, my dear grandmother, in giving you another grandson. He is the prettiest child in the world, and I believe he will become a great beauty." In that she was not mistaken. He grew to be one of the handsomest men in his realm, but also one of the most corrupt.

The Duchesse de Bourgogne loved the theater, and was herself a good actress. Even before her marriage, on the 12th of January, 1697, she had taken, at St. Cyr, the rôle of a little Israelite in the tragedy of *Esther,* to the satisfaction of the king and Madame de Maintenon. In 1699 she took part in a number of performances given in the grand cabinet of Madame de Maintenon. They played *Jonathas et Absalon,* tragedies of Duché, the *Ceinture Magique* of Rousseau, *Athalie,* and *Les Précieuses Ridicules.* The Duchesse de Bourgogne, the Duc de Chartres, the Comte and Comtesse d'Ayen, and the young Comte de Noailles, all magnificently attired, had the chief parts. Baron, the old actor, instructed them and played with them. The minor parts were taken by domestics of M. de Noailles. There were in all but forty spectators — the king, Madame de Maintenon, Monseigneur, the Duc de Bourgogne, the Duc de Berry, the Princesse de Conti, the Duc du Maine, and some ladies of the palace. In 1702 the Palatine, then in mourning for Monsieur, was admitted to a performance, since Madame de Maintenon thought it advisable to do so, after that scene when the king had requested her to make friends with the Palatine. In a letter, under date of February 3, 1702, to the King of Spain, the Palatine mentions the play. "Since Your Majesty is fond of plays, I cannot prevent myself from telling you that Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne has played with the Comtesse d'Ayen, Madame de Melun, my son, the Comte d'Ayen, Duché,

The Duchesse de Bourgogne as Diana

Rousseau, and Baron. I assure you, monsieur, that they did wonderfully well. All this took place in private in the cabinet of Madame de Maintenon. The king gave me permission to see it. I was surprised to see how well they played. I am certain that Your Majesty would be astonished to see how my son played, and the Comte d'Ayen. This play would have made you weep. I cried like a fool, and the king could not keep back some tears also. The subject was the death of Absalom."

The duchess loved jewels, and in September, 1700, the king gave her a necklace of twenty-one pearls, worth 50,000 crowns. Later he gave her a supreme mark of his favor and confidence. "The king," says Dangeau (December 9, 1710), "has left to Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne the entire government of her household, and the disposition of all the places that may become vacant. He had never done so for the queen, nor for Mme. la Dauphine."[1] The duchess had conquered the heart of her royal grandfather-in-law.

The secret of that conquest Saint-Simon has revealed: "She spared nothing, not even her health, to gain the king and Madame de Maintenon. Her suppleness toward them was without example, and never for a moment was at fault. She accompanied it with all the discretion that her knowledge of them, acquired by study and experience, had given her, and could measure their dispositions to an inch. In this way she had acquired a familiarity with them such as none of the king's children had approached. In public, serious, measured, with the king, and in timid decorum with Madame de Maintenon, whom she never addressed except as 'aunt,' thus prettily confounding friendship and rank; in private, prattling, skipping, flying around them, now perched upon the sides of their arm-chairs, now playing upon their knees, she clasped them round the neck, embraced them, kissed them,

[1] The wife of Monseigneur.

caressed them, rumpled them, tickled them under the chin, rummaged their tables and their papers, and broke open their letters, if she saw that her waggeries were likely to be received in good part." How could two old people, burdened with greatness, bound by etiquette, and oppressed with care, resist that? But this triumph of the Duchesse de Bourgogne was not a thing of chance. She triumphed not only because she was amiable, light-hearted, and lovable, but because she possessed tact. We may be very certain that she never broke open a letter when she saw that her playfulness was not likely to be well received, and that she never rumpled the king at the wrong moment. She was sure of her ground always, because she "had measured his disposition to an inch." No child of his had ever had the wit to do that. The marvelous girl of eleven years whom he met at Montargis, who supped with him, and who "did not fail in anything," did not fail later, when she became Duchesse de Bourgogne.

With the court her triumph was not less complete. "Her skilful father, who thoroughly knew our court, had painted it to her, and had made her acquainted with the only manner of making herself happy there. From the first moment of her arrival she had acted upon his lessons. Gentle, timid, but adroit, fearing to give the slightest pain to anybody, and though all lightness and vivacity, very capable of far-reaching views, constraint, even to annoyance, cost her nothing, though she felt all its weight. Regularly plain, a forehead too prominent, a nose without meaning, thick biting lips, hair and eyebrows of dark chestnut, and well planted, the most speaking and most beautiful eyes in the world, few teeth, and those decayed, about which she was the first to talk and jest, the most beautiful complexion and skin, not much bosom, but what there was admirable, her head carried gallantly, majestically, gracefully, her mien noble, her smile most expressive, her figure long, round, slender, easy, perfectly shaped, her walk

that of a goddess upon the clouds, with such qualifications she pleased supremely. Grace accompanied her every step, and shone through her manners and her most ordinary conversation. An air always simple and natural, often naïve, but seasoned with wit, this, with the ease peculiar to her, charmed all who approached her, and communicated itself to them. She wished to please even the most useless and the most ordinary persons, and yet without making an effort to do so. You were tempted to believe her wholly and solely devoted to those with whom she found herself. Her gaiety, young, quick, and active, animated all, and her nymph-like lightness carried her everywhere, like a whirlwind which fills several places at once, and gives them movement and life. She was the ornament of all diversions, the life and soul of all pleasure. Complacency was natural to her, flowed from her, and was exhibited toward every member of the court." [1] These few lines, written nearly two centuries ago by the Duc de Saint-Simon, are the epitaph of Marie Adelaide of Savoy. She did nothing great, and she died young, but she has the unique honor of having been the one person who drew the hearts of all the court to herself. The pomp and rigidity of etiquette never hardened her; flattery never spoiled her; hatred and malice halted at the threshold of her antechamber. Grace accompanied her; complacency flowed from her; she sought to please even the most useless, even the most humble.

The manner in which she became Dauphine of France has already been told.[2] In less than a year from that time, she and her husband died. The cause of their deaths is still uncertain. Saint-Simon hints at poison, and mentions a box of Spanish snuff presented to the dauphine a week before she died by the Duc de Noailles. On the other hand, no snuff was given to the dauphin, and Saint-Simon declares emphatically that he could never believe in the guilt of the Duc de Noailles.

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 216.

[2] In the chapter on Monseigneur.

If poison was used, suspicion seems to point more strongly to the Duchesse de Berry, proud, vicious, drunken, and debauched. Both the children of the dauphin fell ill, and one died; had the other perished, the Duc and Duchesse de Berry would have succeeded to the throne. But there is no proof that the Duchesse de Berry attempted this wholesale destruction of the heirs of the crown; and it was too much the fashion in that day to attribute everything to poison. All the facts being considered, the opinion of Dussieux is probably correct, that an epidemic of measles, then raging in Paris and Versailles, and the culpable ignorance of the doctors, were the causes. With this view the Palatine is in accord: "Chirac said in her last illness that the Duchesse de Bourgogne would recover, and so she probably would have done if they had not permitted her to get up when the measles had broken out upon her and she was in a copious perspiration. Had they not bled her in the foot she might have been alive now (1716). Immediately after the bleeding, her skin, before as red as fire, changed to the paleness of death, and she became very ill. When they were lifting her out of bed I told them it was better to let the perspiration subside before they bled her. Chirac and Fagon, however, were obstinate and laughed at me. Old Maintenon said to me angrily, 'Do you think you know better than all these medical men?'"[1]

The Duchesse de Bourgogne died in the queen's chamber at Versailles about seven o'clock in the evening on the 12th of February, 1712. The king, who was with her until the end, "mounted into his coach at the foot of the marble staircase, and with Madame de Maintenon and Madame de Caylus went away to Marly. They were both in the most bitter grief, and had not the courage to go to the dauphin."

The body of the dauphine was placed on a state bed in her grand cabinet. Six days later her husband died at Marly, and,

[1] Memoirs of the Duchesse d'Orléans, p. 198.

as Dangeau has said in a simple, touching line, "they then made the bed larger to place there the two bodies." "All the railings of the courtyards were hung with black, as were also the arches of the vestibule, the marble staircase, the Hall of the Guards, and all the apartments of the dauphine, from floor to ceiling. During all the time that the bodies of the dauphin and dauphine lay in state, an immense number of people passed through the grand cabinet and the apartments, as far as the barrier erected in the gallery, from which they regained the staircase through the Hall of the King's Guards." [1]

On the 23d of February, 1712, side by side in the same funeral coach, Louis of France and Marie Adelaide of Savoy passed out of the gilded gateway of Versailles, leaving behind them a great château, draped with black and filled with bitterness, and at Marly a heartbroken king.

[1] Mercure, 1712.

IV

THE DUC D'ANJOU

PHILIPPE of France, Duc d'Anjou, became King of Spain when he was seventeen, and the court of Versailles saw nothing more of him after December, 1700. Up to that time he had been quiet, obedient, reserved, and taciturn. "He must know people before he will speak to them at all," says the Palatine. "If you desire to talk to him, you must tease him and rally him a little, or he will not open his mouth. . . . He is bigger than his brothers. He has the best mien, good features, and fine hair. What is somewhat singular, although his hair is very light, his eyes are quite black; his complexion is clear red and white; he has an Austrian mouth; his voice is deep, and he is singularly slow in speaking. He is a good and peaceable sort of a person, but a little obstinate when he takes it into his head." On state occasions the court saw him in his place on the steps of the throne; that was about all.

When his grandfather accepted the crown of Spain for him, he said little, and when the court came to do him homage, he said less. He had at Versailles a few days of prestige, a few days when he was forced into prominence.

"The king, after his *lever* (November 16, 1700), summoned the Spanish ambassador into his cabinet, and, having called Mgr. le Duc d'Anjou, who was in the back cabinet, he said to the ambassador, 'You can salute him as your king.'

Philippe of France, Duc d'Anjou and King of Spain

The ambassador threw himself on his knees, and kissed the prince's hand in the Spanish manner. He then paid him a long compliment in Spanish. When he had finished, the king said to him, 'He does not yet understand Spanish. It is for me to answer for him.' The courtiers were at the door of the king's cabinet. His Majesty ordered the usher to open both leaves of the door and allow all the courtiers to enter. The king said to them, 'Gentlemen, here is the King of Spain. His birth has called him to that crown. The nation has desired him, and asked him from me, and I have granted their wish with pleasure. This is the will of Heaven.' Then turning toward the King of Spain, he said to him, 'Be a good Spaniard; that is now your first duty; but do not forget that you were born a Frenchman, and preserve the alliance between the two nations. That is the way to render them happy, and to preserve the peace of Europe.' His Majesty then addressed the ambassador, and pointing with his finger to the King of Spain, he said, 'If he follows my advice, you will be a great lord, and that soon; he cannot do better than follow your counsel.' Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne and Mgr. le Duc de Berry embraced the King of Spain, and all three were in tears as they embraced.

"Meanwhile, the Comte de Zinzendorf, the envoy of the emperor, was waiting for the audience he had asked for, to announce to the king the birth of an archduke, and he knew nothing of what had taken place. The king sent the King of Spain and the Spanish ambassador into the back cabinet, while he gave audience to the Comte de Zinzendorf.

"The audience being finished, the king went to chapel. The King of Spain walked at his right side; and they heard mass together in the tribune. The king, seeing that the King of Spain had no cushion, wished to give him his own. The King of Spain was not willing to accept it; and, the king having drawn it from beneath his knees, neither one had it.

On their return from chapel, as they were passing through the state apartments, the king told the King of Spain that one of these apartments should be made his bedchamber,[1] for the time, that the courtiers might pay their court to him there." [2]

On the 1st of December, 1700, the new King of Spain left Versailles, " in pomp, surrounded by many more guards than usual, gendarmes, and light horse," for his kingdom, where he was to lead a singularly colorless existence. In order to keep him there, his royal grandfather was soon involved in a war with Europe, and the War of the Spanish Succession brought the Grand Monarch to the brink of the abyss. He escaped destruction only at the eleventh hour by the victory of Villars at Denain.

[1] The salon of Mercury.

[2] Le Mercure Galant, 1700.

V

THE DUC AND DUCHESSE DE BERRY

CHARLES of France, Duc de Berry, was the gayest, frankest, and most popular of the three sons of Monseigneur. Of medium height, rather stout, with light hair and a fresh handsome face, he had good health and was a great hunter. He had natural wit, but beyond reading and writing, he had learned little. Kind and accessible, without vanity or pride, he had almost persuaded himself that he was a fool. If the king looked hard at him, or talked to him of anything except hunting or shooting, he became confused at once. He was ignorant, honest, sincere, amiable, and popular. In the one thing of importance which he was given to do, he failed. Before the peace was signed at Utrecht in 1713, England demanded a renunciation of the crown of France on the part of the King of Spain, and a like renunciation with respect to Spain on the part of Louis XIV. Spain having made such renunciation, it remained for France to do so. The affair was a state ceremony in Parliament at the Palais de Justice, and M. le Duc de Berry was to represent the king. The Duc de Berry was then twenty-seven.

"Wednesday, the 18th of May, was fixed for the ceremony," says Saint-Simon. "At six o'clock on the morning of that day I went to the apartments of M. le Duc de Berry, in parliamentary dress, and shortly afterward M. d'Orléans came there also, with a grand suite. It had been arranged that the

ceremony was to commence by a compliment from the Chief-President de Mesmes to M. le Duc de Berry, who was to reply to it. He was much troubled at this. Madame de Saint-Simon, to whom he unbosomed himself, found means to obtain the discourse of the chief-president, and gave it to M. le Duc de Berry, to regulate his reply by. This, however, seemed too much for him; he admitted so to Madame de Saint-Simon, and that he knew not what to do. She proposed that I should take the work off his hands, and he was delighted with the expedient. I wrote, therefore, a page and a half of common-sized paper in ordinary handwriting. M. le Duc de Berry liked it, but thought it too long to be learned. I abridged it; he wished it to be still shorter, so that at last there was not more than three quarters of a page. He had learned it by heart, and repeated it in his cabinet the night before the ceremony to Madame de Saint-Simon, who encouraged him as much as she could. About half-past six o'clock we set out; M. le Duc d'Orléans, M. le Duc de Berry, myself, and M. le Duc de Saint-Aignan in one coach, several other coaches following. M. le Duc de Berry was very silent all the journey, appearing to be much occupied with the speech he had learned by heart. M. d'Orléans[1] on the contrary, was full of gaiety, and related some of his youthful adventures, and his wild doings by night in the streets of Paris. We arrived at the Porte de la Conférence at the end of the terrace of the Tuileries. We found there the trumpeters and drummers of M. le Duc de Berry's guard, who made a great noise all the rest of our journey, which ended at the Palais de Justice. . . . All the princes of the blood, the peers, and the Parliament were assembled. When M. le Duc de Berry entered, everything was ready. Silence having been with difficulty obtained, the chief-president paid his compliment to the prince. When he had finished, it was for M. le Duc de Berry to re-

[1] Philippe, Duc de Chartres and Duc d'Orléans.

ply. He half took off his hat, put it back again immediately, looked at the chief-president, and said, 'Monsieur'; after a moment's pause he repeated—'Monsieur.' Then he looked at the assembly, and said again, 'Monsieur.' Afterward he turned toward M. d'Orléans, who, like himself, was as red as fire, next to the chief-president, and finally stopped short, nothing else than 'Monsieur' having been able to issue from his mouth. I saw distinctly the confusion of M. le Duc de Berry, and sweated at it; but what could be done? The duke turned again toward M. d'Orléans, who lowered his head; both were dismayed. At last the chief-president, seeing there was no other resource, finished this cruel scene, by taking off his cap to M. le Duc de Berry, and inclining himself very low, as if the response was finished. Immediately afterward he told the king's people to begin. The embarrassment of the courtiers and the surprise of the magistracy may be imagined! . . . During the journey to Versailles, M. le Duc de Berry was as silent as ever. To add to his vexation, as soon as he arrived at Versailles, the Princesse de Montauban, without knowing a word of what had passed, set herself to exclaim, with her usual flattery, that she was charmed with the grace and the appropriate eloquence with which he had spoken at the Parliament. M. le Duc de Berry blushed with vexation, and when at last he got rid of her, he went to his own apartments, said not a word to the persons he found there, scarcely one to his wife, but taking Madame de Saint-Simon with him, he went into his library, and shut himself up alone with her. Throwing himself into an arm-chair, he cried out that he was dishonored, and wept scalding tears. Then he related to Madame de Saint-Simon, in the midst of sobs, how he had stuck fast at the Parliament, said that he should everywhere be regarded as an ass and a blockhead, and repeated the compliments he had received from Madame de Montauban, who, he said, had laughed at him and insulted

him, knowing well what had happened; then infuriated against her to the last degree, he called her all sorts of names. Madame de Saint-Simon spared no exertion in order to calm him, assuring him that Madame de Montauban could not possibly have known what had taken place, as the news had not reached Versailles, and that she had no other object than flattery in addressing him. Nothing availed. Complaints and silence succeeded each other in the midst of tears. Suddenly falling upon the Duc de Beauvilliers and upon the king, accusing them of the defects of his education, 'They thought only of making me stupid,' he cried, 'and of stifling all my powers. I was a younger son. I coped with my brother. They feared the consequences; they annihilated me. I was taught only to play and to hunt, and they have succeeded in making me a fool and an ass, incapable of anything, the laughing-stock and disdain of everybody.' Madame de Saint-Simon was overpowered with compassion, and did everything to calm him. By degrees he became consoled, but never afterward did any one dare to speak to him of his misadventure at the peace ceremony." [1]

A good wife could have made something of the Duc de Berry, but it was his misfortune to be tied to the drunken, debauched daughter of the Duc d'Orléans. [2] That was largely Saint-Simon's doing, and a work he lived to regret. "I will say," he cries, "that if I had known, or merely suspected, that Mlle. d'Orléans was as bad as she showed herself directly after her marriage, and always more and more since, she would never have become Duchesse de Berry." It was unfortunate that he did not find out, or suspect, because he was so frightfully energetic in bringing about the marriage. Mme. la Duchesse de Berry "partook of few meals in private at which she did not get so drunk as to lose consciousness, and

[1] Saint-Simon, II, pp. 246–248.

[2] Philippe, Duc de Chartres and Duc d'Orléans.

to bring up all she had taken on every side. The presence of the Duc de Berry, of the Duc and Duchesse d'Orléans, and of the ladies with whom she was on familiar terms, in no way restrained her. She often treated her father with a haughtiness which was terrifying on all accounts. In her gallantries she was as unrestrained as in other things." Though Madame de Berry was brought drunk to Versailles after more than one supper, everything was very carefully hidden from the king and Madame de Maintenon. After the king's death, the duchess had a free rein, and her performances belong chiefly to the regency.

Her husband did not live to see that day. While hunting in the spring of 1714, his horse slipped, and in pulling him up, the Duc de Berry struck hard against the pommel of the saddle, and broke a vein in his stomach. He died on Friday, the 4th of May, 1714, at four o'clock in the morning, in his twenty-eighth year.

VI

MONSIEUR AND MADAME

MONSIEUR

PHILIPPE of France, Duc d'Orléans, was a striking contrast to his kingly brother. He had, in common with Louis, a "perfect court air," the result of the training of Anne of Austria, and, to the great annoyance of Saint-Simon, his features recalled those of Louis XIII, who, because he had advanced the interests of the elder Saint-Simon, was, in the opinion of the son, the model sovereign. "Monsieur was a little round-bellied man, who wore such high-heeled shoes that he seemed mounted always upon stilts; always decked out like a woman, covered everywhere with rings, bracelets, jewels; with a long black wig powdered and curled in front; with ribbons wherever he could put them; steeped in perfumes, and in fine a model of cleanliness. He was accused of putting on an imperceptible touch of rouge. He had a long nose, good eyes and mouth, a full but very long face. All his portraits resembled him."

When in Paris, he resided at the Palais Royal, but he lived chiefly at his Château of St. Cloud, and as his brother would not allow him to have any authority, he lived for pleasure only. "At St. Cloud, where all his numerous household assembled, there were many ladies who, to speak the truth, would scarcely have been received elsewhere, but many also

of a higher set, and a great store of gamblers. The pleasures of all kinds of games, and the singular beauty of the place, where a thousand calèches were always ready to whirl even the most lazy ladies through the drives, soft music and good cheer, made it a palace of delight, grace, and magnificence."

Having lost his first wife, Henriette d'Angleterre, in 1670, he was married in 1671 to Elizabeth-Charlotte, Princess Palatine. As his wife, she can speak of him with some authority. "Monsieur was very small; his hair and eyebrows were quite black, his eyes were dark, his face long and narrow, his nose large, his mouth small. He was fond of cards, of holding drawing-rooms, of eating, dancing, and dress; in short, of all that women are fond of. The king loved hunting, was fond of talking of war, and had all manly tastes and habits. My husband rather affected large parties and masquerades. He danced well, but in a feminine manner; he could not dance like a man because his shoes were too high-heeled. Excepting when he was with the army, he would never get on horseback. The soldiers used to say that he was more afraid of being sunburnt and of the blackness of the powder than of the musket-balls, and it was very true. He was fond of building. He was so fond of the ringing of bells that he used to go to Paris on All Souls' Day for the purpose of hearing the bells, which are rung during the whole of the vigils on that day. He liked no other music, and was often laughed at for it by his friends; he would join in the joke, and confess that a peal of bells delighted him beyond all expression. He wrote so badly that he was often puzzled to read his own letters, and would bring them to me to decipher them. He was of a good disposition enough, and if he had not yielded so entirely to the bad advice of his favorites, he would have been the best master in the world. I loved him, although he caused me a great deal of pain."

He did undoubtedly cause her pain. He was effeminate

and debauched. "His minions, who owed him everything," says Saint-Simon, "sometimes treated him most insolently, and he had often much to do to appease horrible jealousies. He lived in continual hot water with his favorites, to say nothing of the quarrels of that troop of ladies of a very decided character, many of whom were very malicious, and most of them more than malicious, with whom Monsieur used to divert himself, entering into all their wretched squabbles."

Yet this prince had in him a possibility of better things. In the campaign of 1677, he won a battle. "Monsieur got the start of the Prince of Orange, gave him battle near Cassel, obtained a complete victory, immediately took St. Omer, and then joined the king. Never afterward did the king give Monsieur the command of an army." Louis was determined that his brother should not be a great personage, nor a power in the state. Cassel was the only important thing Monsieur ever did, or was allowed to do. His education and environment were all against him, and as he was without resources, with no taste for application, reading, or self-improvement, he fell naturally into luxurious idleness and debauchery. But he kept his grand manners, none the less. "He loved great people, and was so affable and polite that crowds came to him. The difference which he knew how to make, and which he never failed to make, between every one according to his position, contributed greatly to his popularity. In his receptions, by his greater or more neglectful attention, and by his words, he always marked in a flattering manner the differences made by birth and dignity, by age and merit, and by profession; and all this with a dignity natural to him, and a constant facility which he had acquired."

By his first wife he had had two daughters, and by his second, a daughter, and a son Philippe, the future Regent of France. He was too easy-going to exert much authority over them. "He loved his children too well even to reprove them

Philippe of France, Duc d'Orléans

when they deserved it," says the Palatine. "If he had occasion to make complaints of them, he used to come to me with them. 'But, Monsieur,' I have said, 'they are your children as well as mine; why do you not correct them?' He replied, 'I do not know how to scold, and besides they would not care for me if I did; they fear no one but you.' By always threatening the children with me, he kept them in constant fear of me."

He lived on good terms with his brother, was merry with him in private, without ever attempting to place himself on an equal footing, and in public treated him with great reverence. "In what regarded his service, and in his manner of approaching and leaving the king, no private person could behave with more respect." The Grand Monarch had so tight a grip on all the members of the royal family that not one of them failed to render him proper homage, and the effect of this upon the courtiers was marked. When the family met in the king's cabinet at Versailles in the evenings after supper, Monsieur alone had an arm-chair in the king's presence.

The one quarrel of a serious nature between Louis and Monsieur took place just before the latter's death. The king, who was anxious to advance and establish his illegitimate children, had brought about a marriage between Mlle. de Blois, his second daughter by Madame de Montespan, and the Duc de Chartres, son of Monsieur. It was upon the subject of the Duc de Chartres that the royal brothers quarreled. "For some time past Monsieur had been sorely grieved that his son, M. le Duc de Chartres, had not been appointed to the command of an army. When M. de Chartres married, the king, who had converted his nephew by force into a son-in-law, promised him all kinds of favors, but except those which were written down in black and white, had not given him any. M. de Chartres, annoyed at this, and at the manner in

which the illegitimate children [1] were promoted over his head, had given himself up to all kinds of youthful follies and excesses. The king was surprised to find Monsieur agree with his son's ambition for a command, but gave a flat refusal when overtures were made to him on the subject. Monsieur, therefore, winked at all the escapades performed or threatened by his son, and said nothing, not being sorry that the king should become uneasy, which was soon the case. The king at last spoke to Monsieur, and being coldly received, reproached him for not knowing how to exercise authority over his son. Upon this Monsieur fired up, and quite as much from foregone decision as from anger, in his turn asked the king what was to be done with a son at such an age, who was sick of treading the galleries of Versailles and the pavement of the court, of being married as he was, and of remaining, as it were, naked, while his brothers-in-law were clothed in dignities, governments, establishments, and offices, against all policy and example. His son, he said, was worse off than any one in the king's service, for all others could earn distinction. He added that idleness was the mother of all vice, and that it gave him much pain to see his only son abandon himself to debauchery and bad company, but that it would be cruel to blame a young man, forced as it were into these follies, and to say nothing against him by whom he was thus forced. The king was astonished to hear this straightforward language. Monsieur before had never let out to within a thousand leagues of this tone, which was only the more annoying because supported by unanswerable reasons that did not convince. Mastering his embarrassment, however, the king answered as a brother rather than as a sovereign, endeavoring by gentle words to calm the excitement of Monsieur. But Monsieur was stung to the quick by the king's neglect of M. de Chartres, and would not be pacified. The conversation

[1] The Duc du Maine and the Comte de Toulouse.

lasted very long, and was pushed very far, Monsieur throughout taking the high tone, the king very gentle. They separated in this manner; Monsieur frowning, but not daring to break out; the king annoyed, but not wishing to estrange his brother, much less to let their squabble be known. As Monsieur passed most of his summers at St. Cloud, the separation which this occasioned put them at their ease, while waiting for a reconciliation. . . . In public little or nothing appeared, except that familiar people remarked politeness and attention on the king's part, and coldness on that of Monsieur. Nevertheless, being advised not to push matters too far, Monsieur gave his son a lecture, and made him change his conduct by degrees. But Monsieur still remained irritated against the king, and this completely upset him, accustomed as he had always been to live on the best of terms with his brother, and to be treated by him in every respect as such, except that the king would not allow Monsieur to become a great personage.

"On Thursday, the 8th of June (1701), Monsieur went from St. Cloud to dine with the king at Marly, and, as was his custom, entered the cabinet after the council. He found the king angry with M. de Chartres for neglecting his wife and allowing her to seek consolation for this neglect in the society of others. The Duc de Chartres was at that time enamoured of Mlle. de Sery, maid of honor to Madame, and carried on his suit in the most open and flagrant manner. The king took this for his theme, and very stiffly reproached Monsieur for the conduct of his son. Monsieur, who needed little to exasperate him, tartly replied that fathers who led certain lives had little authority over their children, and little right to blame them. The king, who felt the point of the answer, fell back on the patience of his daughter, and said that at least she ought not to be allowed to see the truth so clearly. But Monsieur was resolved to have his fling, and recalled, in the most aggravating manner, the conduct the

king had once adopted toward his queen, with respect to his mistresses, even allowing the latter to accompany him in his journeys, the queen at his side, and all in the same coach. This last remark drove the king beyond all patience, and he redoubled his reproaches, so that presently both were shouting to one another at the top of their voices. The door of the apartment in which they wrangled was open, and only covered by a curtain, as was the custom at Marly, and the adjoining room was full of courtiers, waiting to see the king go by to dinner. On the other side was a little salon, devoted to very private purposes, and filled with valets, who could hear distinctly every word of what passed. The usher at the door, upon hearing this noise, entered, and told the king how many people were within hearing, and immediately retired. The conversation did not stop, however; it was simply carried on in a lower tone. Monsieur continued his reproaches; said that the king, in marrying his daughter to M. de Chartres, had promised marvels, and had done nothing; that for his part, he had wished his son to serve in the army, to keep him out of the way of these intrigues, but that his demands had been in vain. The king, more and more carried away by anger, replied that the war would soon oblige him to make some retrenchments, and that he would commence by cutting down the pensions of Monsieur, since he showed himself so little accommodating. At this moment the king was informed that his dinner was ready, and both he and Monsieur left the cabinet and went to table; Monsieur all fury, flushed, and with eyes inflamed by anger. His face thus crimsoned induced some ladies, who were at the king's table, and some courtiers behind, but more for the purpose of saying something than anything else, to make the remark that Monsieur, by his appearance, had great need of bleeding. The same thing had been said some time before at St. Cloud; he was absolutely too full; and, indeed, he had himself ad-

mitted that it was true. Even the king, in spite of their squabble, had more than once pressed him to consent. But Tancrede, Monsieur's head surgeon, was old and an unskilful bleeder; he had missed fire once. Monsieur would not be bled by him, and, not to vex him, was good enough to refuse to be bled by another, and to die in consequence. Upon hearing this observation about bleeding, the king spoke to Monsieur again on the subject, and said he did not know what prevented him from having Monsieur taken at once to his room and bled by force. The dinner passed then in the ordinary manner, and Monsieur ate extremely, as he did at all his meals, to say nothing of an abundant supply of chocolate in the morning, and what he swallowed all day in the shape of fruit, pastry, preserves, and dainties of every kind, with which indeed the tables of his cabinets and his pockets were always filled.

"Upon rising from table, the king, in his carriage, alone, went to St. Germain to visit the King and Queen of England. The other members of the royal family went there likewise separately. Monsieur, after going there also, returned to St. Cloud.

"In the evening after supper, the king was in his cabinet at Marly with Monseigneur and the princesses, as at Versailles, when a messenger came from St. Cloud, and asked to see the king in the name of the Duc de Chartres. He was admitted into the cabinet, and said that Monsieur had been taken very ill while at supper, that he had been bled, that he was better, and that an emetic had been given to him. The fact was that Monsieur had supped as usual with the ladies who were at St. Cloud, and during the meal, as he poured out a glass of liqueur for Madame de Bouillon, it was perceived that he stammered and pointed at something with his hand. As it was customary for him sometimes to speak Spanish, some of the ladies asked what he said, others cried aloud. All

this was the work of an instant, and immediately afterward Monsieur fell in a fit of apoplexy upon M. de Chartres, who supported him. He was taken to his apartment, shaken, moved about, bled considerably, and had strong emetics administered to him, but scarcely any signs of life did he show.

" Upon hearing this news, the king, who had been accustomed to fly to Monsieur for a mere nothing, went to the apartment of Madame de Maintenon, and had her waked up. He passed a quarter of an hour with her, and then, toward midnight, returning to his room, he ordered his coach to be got ready, and sent the Marquis de Gesvres to St. Cloud to see if Monsieur was worse, in which case the marquis was to return and wake him. The king then went to bed. Besides the strained relation in which he and Monsieur were at that time, I think the king suspected some artifice, and that he went in consequence to consult Madame de Maintenon, and preferred sinning against all laws of propriety to running the chance of being duped. Madame de Maintenon did not like Monsieur; she feared him. He paid her very little court, and despite all his timidity and deference, observations escaped him, at times when he was with the king, which marked his disdain of her. She was not eager, therefore, to advise the king to go and visit him, still less to commence a journey by night, with the loss of rest, and witnessing a spectacle so sad, so likely to touch him, and make him make reflections on himself. She hoped that if things went quietly he might be spared the trouble altogether. A moment after the king had gotten into bed, a page came to say that Monsieur was better, and that he had just asked for some Schaffhausen water, which is excellent for apoplexy. An hour and a half later, another messenger came, awakened the king, and told him that the emetic had had no effect, and that Monsieur was very ill. At this the king rose and set out at once. On the way he met the Marquis de Gesvres, who was coming to fetch him,

and brought similar news. It may be imagined what hubbub and disorder there was this night at Marly, and what horror at St. Cloud, that palace of delight! Everybody who was at Marly hastened as he was best able to St. Cloud. Whoever was ready first started together. Men and women jostled each other, and threw themselves into the coaches without order, and without regard to etiquette. Monseigneur was with Mme. la Duchesse. He was so struck by what had occurred, and its resemblance to what he himself had experienced,[1] that he could scarcely stand, and was dragged, almost carried, to the carriage, all trembling.

"The king arrived at St. Cloud before three o'clock in the morning. Monsieur had not had a moment's consciousness since his attack. A ray of intelligence came to him for an instant, while his confessor, Père du Trévoux, went to say mass, but it returned no more. The most horrible sights have often ridiculous contrasts. When the confessor came back, he cried, 'Monsieur, do you not know your confessor? Do you not know the good little Père du Trévoux, who is speaking to you?' This caused the less afflicted to laugh indecently. The king appeared much moved. He had never had cause not to love his brother tenderly, and although on bad terms with him for the last two months, these sad moments recalled all his tenderness; perhaps, too, he reproached himself with having hastened death by the scene of the morning. The king heard mass at St. Cloud, and toward eight o'clock in the morning, Monsieur being past all hope, Madame de Maintenon and the Duchesse de Bourgogne persuaded the king to stay no longer, and returned with him in his carriage to Marly. As he was leaving, and was showing some sign of affection to the Duc de Chartres, both weeping very much, that young prince did not fail to take advantage of the opportunity. 'Sire!' he exclaimed, embracing the king's thighs,

[1] Monseigneur had had a slight attack of apoplexy not long before.

'what will become of me? I lose Monsieur, and I know that you do not like me.' The king, surprised and much touched, embraced him, and said all the tender things he could.

"At the departure of the king from St. Cloud, all the crowd assembled there little by little withdrew, so that Monsieur, dying, stretched upon a couch in his cabinet, remained exposed to the valets and the lower officers of his household, the majority of whom, either by affection or interest, were much afflicted. . . . On arriving at Marly, the king went with the Duchesse de Bourgogne to the apartment of Madame de Maintenon. Three hours after came M. Fagon, who had been ordered not to leave Monsieur until he was dead or better, which could not be but by a miracle. As soon as he saw him, the king said, 'Well, M. Fagon, my brother is dead?' 'Yes, Sire,' said Fagon. 'No remedy has taken effect.' The king wept a good deal. He was pressed to dine with Madame de Maintenon, but he would not do so, and had his dinner, as usual, with the ladies. Tears often ran down his cheek during the meal, which was short. Then he shut himself up in Madame de Maintenon's apartments until seven o'clock, when he took a turn in the garden. Afterward he worked with Chamillart and Pontchartrain, and arranged all the funeral ceremonies of Monsieur. He supped an hour before his customary time, and went to bed soon afterward.

"Next morning, Friday, the 9th of June, the Duc de Chartres came to the king, who was still in bed, and who spoke to him in a very friendly manner. He said that the duke must for the future regard him as his father, that he would take care of his position and his interests, that he had forgotten all the causes of anger he had had against him, and that he hoped the duke would also forget them. It may easily be conceived how well M. de Chartres answered all this. . . . As for M. de Chartres himself, he was prodigiously well treated. The king gave him all the pensions Monsieur had enjoyed, be-

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Elizabeth Charlotte, Duchesse d'Orléans, Princess Palatine

sides allowing him to retain his own, so that he had 1,800,000 livres a year, in addition to the Palais Royal, St. Cloud, and other mansions. He had a Swiss guard, which none but the sons of France had ever had before, and, in fact, he retained all the privileges his father had enjoyed, and took the title of Duc d'Orléans. All these honors, so great and so unheard-of, bestowed on M. de Chartres, and an income of 100,000 crowns more than his father had had, were due solely to the recent quarrel between Monsieur and the king." [1]

In such fashion the king made amends for his quarrel with Monsieur, and a few years later the new Duc d'Orléans was given command of an army in Italy.

MADAME

THE second wife of Monsieur was an uncommon woman, and had by no means an easy time at the court of Versailles. She was homely, blunt, and outspoken; she was first and last and always a German; she had neither French tastes nor French manners, and considered it quite beneath her to acquire them; flattery was a fine art she never knew; she loved hunting, horses and dogs, and German dishes; she spoke her mind, and called a spade a spade. With such a character, it may be imagined what an aversion she took to Madame de Maintenon, and the hatred was mutual. But in spite of all that was done to prejudice the king against her, Louis recognized her worth, seeing beneath a rough exterior a genuine heart. "She passed her days," says Saint-Simon, "in a little cabinet she had chosen, where the windows were ten feet from the ground, gazing perpetually on the portraits of Paladins and other German princes, with which she had tapestried the walls, and writing with her own hand whole volumes of letters, of which she always kept autograph copies." It is from these letters, written chiefly to the Duke and Duchess of

[1] Saint-Simon, I, pp. 209–218.

Brunswick, that we are able to know the character of Elizabeth-Charlotte, Duchesse d'Orléans.

"If my father[1] had loved me as well as I loved him," she says, "he would never have sent me into a country so dangerous as this, to which I came through pure obedience and against my own inclination. Here duplicity passes for wit, and frankness is looked upon as folly. I am neither cunning nor mysterious. . . . I am unquestionably very ugly. My eyes are small, my nose is short and thick, my lips are long and flat; these do not constitute much of a physiognomy. If I had not a good heart, no one could endure me. To know whether my eyes give tokens of possessing wit, they must be examined with a microscope, or it will be difficult to judge. Hands more ugly than mine are not perhaps to be found on the whole globe. The king has often told me so, and has made me laugh at it heartily; for not being able to flatter even myself that I possessed any one thing which could be called pretty, I resolved to be the first to laugh at my own ugliness; this has succeeded as well as I could have wished, and I must confess that I have seldom been at a loss for something to laugh at. I am not good at lying in bed; as soon as I awake I must get up. I seldom breakfast, and then only on bread and butter. I take neither chocolate, nor coffee, nor tea, not being able to endure those foreign drugs. I am German in all my habits. . . . I never had anything like French manners, and I never could assume them, because I always considered it an honor to be born a German, and always cherished the maxims of my own country, which are seldom in favor here. In my youth I loved swords and guns much better than toys. I wished to be a boy. . . . Upon my arrival in France I was made to hold a conference with three bishops. They all differed in their creeds, and so, taking the quintessence of their opinions, I formed a religion of my

[1] Charles-Louis, Elector Palatine.

own. . . . I was very glad when, after the birth of my daughter,[1] my husband proposed separate beds; for, to tell the truth, I was never very fond of having children. When he proposed it to me, I answered, 'Yes, Monsieur, I shall be very well contented with the arrangement, provided you do not hate me, and that you will continue to behave with some kindness to me.' He promised, and we were very well satisfied with each other. . . . I obeyed the late Monsieur by not troubling him with my embraces, and always conducted myself toward him with respect and submission. He was a good sort of man, notwithstanding his weaknesses, which, indeed, oftener excited my pity than my anger. I must confess that I did occasionally express some impatience, but when he begged pardon, it was all forgotten. . . . I cared little for dress, because jewels and decoration attract attention. As Monsieur loved to be covered with diamonds, it was fortunate that I did not regard them, for otherwise we should have quarreled about who was to wear them. . . . Monsieur was taken ill at ten o'clock at night, but he did not die until the next day at noon. I can never think of that night without horror. I remained with him from ten at night until five the next morning, when he lost all consciousness. . . . After Monsieur's death the king sent to ask me whither I wished to retire, whether to a convent in Paris, or to Montargis, or elsewhere. I replied that as I had the honor to be of the royal house I could not live but where the king was, and that I intended to go directly to Versailles. The king was pleased at this, and came to see me. He somewhat mortified me by saying that he sent to ask me whither I wished to go because he had not imagined that I would choose to stay where he was. I replied that I did not know who could have told His Majesty anything so false and injurious, and that I had a much more sincere respect and attachment for him

[1] Elizabeth-Charlotte d'Orléans, born in 1676.

than those who had thus falsely accused me. The king then dismissed all the persons present, and we had a long explanation, in the course of which the king told me I hated Madame de Maintenon. I confessed that I did hate her, but only through my attachment for him, and because she did me wrong to His Majesty; nevertheless, I added that, if it were agreeable to him that I should be reconciled to her, I was ready to become so. The old woman was not prepared for this, or she would not have suffered the king to come to me. He was, however, so satisfied that he remained favorable to me up to his last hour. He made old Maintenon come, and said to her, 'Madame is willing to make friends with you.' He then caused us to embrace, and there the scene ended. He required her also to live upon good terms with me, which she did in appearance, but secretly played me all sorts of tricks. . . . The Château of Montargis is my jointure; at Orléans there is no house. St. Cloud is not a part of the hereditary property, but was bought by Monsieur with his own money. Therefore my jointure produces nothing; all that I have to live on comes from the king and my son. At the commencement of my widowhood I was left unpaid, and there was an arrear of 300,000 francs due to me, which was not paid until after the death of the king. What then would have become of me if I had chosen to retire to Montargis? My household expenses amounted annually to 298,758 livres."

The most bitter pill that the Palatine had to swallow was the marriage of her son Philippe to Mlle. de Blois, daughter of the king and Madame de Montespan. "If, by shedding my own blood, I could have prevented my son's marriage," she says in her *Memoirs,* "I would willingly have done so." In her eyes a bastard was a bastard, king or no king. "I am a right German," she said proudly, "and could never endure unequal alliances." As may be imagined, the king did not apply to her at first, but gained Monsieur and the young Duc

de Chartres. As soon as Madame learned of the project, she spoke to her son with force, and drew from him a promise that he would never consent to it. But how could Philippe d'Orléans, a youth of eighteen, resist the will of a man like the Grand Monarch?

"One day early after dinner (1692)," says Saint-Simon, "I saw the Duc de Chartres, with a very sad air, come out of his apartment, and enter the cabinet of the king. He found His Majesty alone with Monsieur. The king spoke very obligingly to the Duc de Chartres, said that he wished to see him married, that he offered him his daughter, but that he did not intend to constrain him in the matter, but left him quite at liberty. This discourse, however, pronounced with that terrifying majesty so natural to the king, and addressed to a timid young prince, took away his voice and quite unnerved him. He thought to escape from his slippery position by throwing himself upon Monsieur and Madame, and stammeringly replied that the king was master, but that a son's will depended upon that of his parents. 'What you say is very proper,' replied the king; 'but as soon as you consent to my proposition your father and mother will not oppose it.' And then turning to Monsieur, he said, 'Is this not true, my brother?' Monsieur consented, as he had already done, and the only person remaining to consult was Madame, who was immediately sent for. As soon as she came, the king, making her acquainted with his project, said that he reckoned she would not oppose what her husband and her son had already agreed to. Madame, who had counted on the refusal of her son, was tongue-tied. She threw two furious glances upon Monsieur and the Duc de Chartres, and then said that as they wished it, she had nothing to say, made a slight reverence to the king, and left the cabinet. Her son immediately followed her to explain his conduct; but railing against him, with tears in her eyes, she would not listen, and drove him

from her room. Her husband, who joined her shortly afterward, met with almost the same treatment. . . . On the morrow we went to wait as usual in the grand gallery for the king to go to chapel. Madame came there. Her son approached her, as he did every day, to kiss her hand. At that very moment she gave him a box on the ear, so sonorous that it was heard several steps distant. Such treatment in the presence of all the court covered with confusion this unfortunate prince, and overwhelmed the infinite number of spectators, of whom I was one, with prodigious astonishment. That day the immense dowry was declared, and on Sunday there was a grand ball. . . . I had been that morning to wait on Madame, who could not refrain from saying, in a sharp angry voice, that I was doubtless very glad of the promise of so many balls, as was natural at my age, but that, for her part, she was old, and wished they were well over. . . . On the Monday before Shrove Tuesday, all the marriage party and the bride and bridegroom, superbly dressed, repaired a little before noon to the cabinet of the king, and afterward to chapel. The Cardinal de Bouillon, in full robes, married them and said mass." [1]

Madame was an intrepid huntress, and went to the chase two or three times a week, attending the stag-hunts of the king and the wolf-hunts of Monseigneur. She saw in all more than a thousand stags taken, and had in all some twenty-four or twenty-five falls from her horse. "*Mais cela ne m'a pas effrayée*," she adds coolly. "I know very well," she said in 1706, "what it is to be exposed in hunting to a burning sun. Many times I remain at the chase from early morning until five in the evening, and in summer until nine at night. I come back red as a lobster." In 1683, in the hunt at Fontainebleau, she saved herself from injury by her presence of mind. "In the last hunt at Fontainebleau, a

[1] Saint-Simon, I, pp. 12–18.

serious accident would have happened to me if I had not jumped quickly from my horse. A deer, terrified by the chase, and even more so by meeting a horseman in front of me, rushed directly at me with such force that, in spite of all my efforts to restrain my horse, I could not stop him quickly enough to avoid the shock with the beast, which came bounding, striking my horse in the mouth, and breaking the bit and bridle. My horse was so frightened that he did not know what he did; he snorted and leaped to one side. When I saw that the bit held him no longer, I turned the bridle into his mouth, leaped to the ground, and held him fast until my people ran to my assistance. If I had not dismounted so quickly, my horse would doubtless have broken my neck. This adventure made such a stir at court that for two days they talked of nothing else. Here people transform a trifle into a great affair." In 1697 she was not so fortunate: "I must tell you what has happened to me. I had gone with Monseigneur to hunt the wolf. It had rained, and the ground was icy and slippery. We had hunted for two hours without finding a wolf, and were on our way to another locality where we counted upon finding one, when, as we were following the path, a wolf suddenly appeared in front of my horse. My horse reared, and slipped, and fell on its right side. My elbow struck a large stone, and I dislocated the bone." A peasant in the vicinity set her arm without difficulty, and the Palatine returned to St. Cloud with little suffering; but as soon as the court doctors got hold of her, they reset her arm, and she suffered much, and a month later was hardly able to raise her hand to her mouth. "I think," said she, "that they were simply jealous of what the poor peasant had done so well."

In those eight hundred and odd letters found among the papers of the Duchess of Brunswick, Madame had much to say about all the chief figures of the court of Louis XIV, but

upon the subject of Madame de Maintenon she waxed eloquent. "Goody Scarron," the "old woman," and the "old witch" are her favorite terms. Her portrait of Madame de Maintenon is in some particulars little more than a caricature; yet volumes might be written on the subject, and fail to bring out the duplicity of Madame de Maintenon and the dupability of the Grand Monarch, as do these few lines from the Palatine's pen: "Nobody at court used perfumery except that old woman; her gloves were always scented with jessamine. The king could not bear scent on any other person, and only endured it in her because she made him believe that it was somebody else who was perfumed." [1]

It was not the least of the satisfactions of the Palatine that she lived to see her son, Philippe, Regent of France, and Madame de Maintenon in obscurity at St. Cyr.

[1] Memoirs of the Duchesse d'Orléans, p. 83.

VII

THE DUC AND DUCHESSE DE CHARTRES

THE DUC DE CHARTRES

PHILIPPE, Duc de Chartres, only son of Monsieur and Madame, and sole nephew of the king, had unusual ability. "Never was man born with so many talents," says Saint-Simon, "with so much readiness and facility in making use of them, and yet never was man so idle, so given up to vacuity and weariness. Madame painted him very happily by an illustration from fairy-tales, of which she was full. She said that all the fairies had been invited to his birth, that all came, and that each gave him some talent, so that he had them all. But an old fairy had been omitted from the invitation list. Piqued at this, she came just at the moment when all the rest had endowed the child with their gifts, and she revenged herself by rendering useless all the talents the child had received from the other fairies, not one of which was he able to make use of. It must be admitted that on the whole this is a speaking portrait."

The bad fairy was no myth, for the Abbé Dubois was the evil genius who wrecked the talents of the Duc de Chartres. "Dubois led him into debauchery, made him despise all duty and decency, and persuaded him that he had too much mind to be the dupe of religion, which he said was a politic invention to frighten ordinary intellects and keep people in subjection. He filled him, too, with his favorite principle, that probity in man and virtue in woman were mere chimeras,

without existence in anybody except in a few poor slaves of early training. . . . Unfortunately all conspired in M. le Duc de Chartres to open his heart and mind to this execrable poison: a fresh and early youth, much strength and health, joy at escaping from the yoke, as well as vexation at his marriage, the wearisomeness produced by idleness, the impulse of his passions, and the example of other young men, whose vanity and whose interest it was to make him live like them. Thus he grew accustomed to debauchery, above all to the uproar of it, so that he could not do without it, and could only divert himself by dint of noise, tumult, and excess. . . . With all his talents, he was totally without honest resources for amusing himself. He was born bored, and was so accustomed to live out of himself that it was insufferable to him to return. He could only live in the midst of the movement and torrent of business — at the head of an army, for instance, or in the cares that arose out of the execution of campaign projects, or in the excitement and uproar of debauchery. He began to languish as soon as he was without noise, excess, and tumult, the time hanging painfully upon his hands. . . . He was of mediocre stature, full-bodied without being fat; his manner and deportment were easy and noble; his face was broad and very agreeable, high in color; his hair black, and wig the same. . . . With much ease when nothing constrained him, he was gentle, affable, open, of facile and charming access; the tone of his voice was agreeable, and he had a surprisingly easy flow of words upon all subjects, which nothing ever disturbed and which never failed to surprise. . . . To hear him, you would have thought him a great reader. Not so. He skimmed, but his memory was so singular that he never forgot things, names, or dates, cherishing remembrance of things with precision; and his apprehension was so good that in skimming thus it was with him precisely as though he had read very laboriously. He had no

Philippe, Duc de Chartres and Duc d'Orléans

presumption, no trace of superiority natural or acquired; he reasoned with you as his equal, and struck the most able with surprise. He never forgot his own position, or allowed others to forget it, but he carried no constraint with him, put everybody at ease, and placed himself upon the level of all others. . . . Although we often spoke upon religion, to which I tried to lead him so long as I had hope of success, I never could unravel the system he had formed for himself, and I ended by becoming persuaded that he wavered unceasingly without forming any religion at all. His passionate desire, like that of his companions in morals, was this, that it would turn out that there is no God; but he had too much enlightenment to be an atheist, who is a particular kind of fool much more rare than is thought. This enlightenment importuned him; he tried to extinguish it and could not. A mortal soul would have been to him a resource, but he could not convince himself of its existence. A God and an immortal soul threw him into sad straits, and yet he could not blind himself to the truth of both the one and the other. I can say then this, I know of what religion he was not; nothing more. I am sure, however, that he was very ill at ease upon this point, and that if a dangerous illness had overtaken him, and he had had the time, he would have thrown himself into the hands of all the priests and all the Capuchins of the town." [1]

In 1692, the Duc de Chartres, much to the disgust of his mother, was married to Mlle. de Blois, daughter of the king and Madame de Montespan. In 1701, at the death of his father, he became Duc d'Orléans. The splendid establishment which the king gave him at that time has already been mentioned. His profligacy turned the king and Madame de Maintenon against him, before he had held his new title many months, and a few years later a witty toast in ridicule of Madame de Maintenon, which he gave at a supper when with

[1] Saint-Simon, II, pp. 334–337.

the army in Spain, finished the business. From that moment Madame de Maintenon was his implacable enemy, and as long as the king lived, the Duc d'Orléans felt the weight of her hand. He made no attempt at reconciliation on his return, and soon found himself in disgrace. The king treated him very coldly, and the courtiers, following the king's example, withdrew from him. He was abandoned. In 1710, the Duc de Saint-Simon, the one firm and true friend of this brilliant but weak prince, stepped in to endeavor to reinstate him, if possible, with the king and Madame de Maintenon.

" I had long seen," he says, " that the only way in which M. d'Orléans could hope to recover his position would be to give up his mistress, Madame d'Argenton, with whom he had been on terms of intimacy for many years past, to the knowledge and scandal of all the world. I knew it would be a bold and dangerous game to play, to try to persuade him to separate himself from a woman he had known and loved so long, but I determined to engage in it, nevertheless, and I looked about for some one to assist me in this enterprise. At once I cast my eyes upon the Maréchal de Besons, who for many years had been the bosom friend of M. d'Orléans. He applauded the undertaking, but doubted, he said, its success; nevertheless, he promised to aid me to the utmost of his power, and, as it will be seen, was as good as his word. . . . At the commencement of 1710, I spoke to M. d'Orléans. I began by extracting from him an admission of the neglect into which he had fallen; the dislike of the king, the hatred of Monseigneur, who accused him of wishing to replace his son in Spain, the hatred of Madame de Maintenon, whom he had offended by his bon-mot, the suspicions of the public, who talked of his chemical experiments; and then, throwing off all fear of consequences, I said that before he could hope to draw back his friends and the world to him, he must reinstate himself in the favor of the king. He appeared struck with what I had said, rose after a profound silence, paced to

and fro, and then asked, 'But how?' Seeing the opportunity so good, I replied in a firm and significant tone, 'How? I know well enough, but I will never tell you; and yet it is the only thing to do.' 'Ah, I understand you,' he exclaimed, as though struck by a thunderbolt; 'I understand you perfectly'; and he threw himself upon a chair at the end of the room. I broke the silence at last by saying that the state which he was in had touched me to the quick, and that I had determined, in conjunction with the Maréchal de Besons, to speak to him upon the subject, and to propose the only means by which he could hope to bring about a change in his position. When I thought I had gone far enough for the time, I left him, evidently affected by what I had said."

On the following day the Duc de Saint-Simon and Maréchal de Besons had a long interview with the Duc d'Orléans, the upshot of which was that the duke finally agreed to give up Madame d'Argenton; and having agreed, before his courage failed him, he sent a lackey at once to Madame de Maintenon to ask for an audience. Madame de Maintenon was very much surprised when M. d'Orléans informed her of his resolution, but appeared delighted and assured him that it would put him on better terms than ever with the king. M. d'Orléans had then an audience with the king, who appeared greatly surprised, and spoke coldly; his coldness was due in part to his astonishment. In the end, the step taken by the Duc d'Orléans improved his position with the king, but Madame de Maintenon, though apparently more friendly, remained implacable. The king's death changed everything. Madame de Maintenon passed into retirement at St. Cyr, and M. d'Orléans became Regent of France.

THE DUCHESSE DE CHARTRES

Mlle. de Blois, daughter of the king and Madame de Montespan, became Duchesse de Chartres in 1692, and Duchesse d'Orléans in 1701. "She was tall and in every way ma-

jestic. Her complexion, her arms, her throat, were admirable; she had a tolerable mouth, with beautiful teeth, somewhat long; and cheeks too broad and too hanging, which interfered with, but did not spoil, her beauty. What disfigured her most were her eyebrows, which were, as it were, peeled and red, with very little hair; she had, however, fine eyelashes, and well-set, chestnut-colored hair. Without being humpbacked or deformed, she had one side larger than the other, and walked awry. She had a good deal of intellect and spoke with much ability. Her utterance, however, was slow and embarrassed, so that unaccustomed ears followed her with difficulty. Every kind of decency and decorum centered themselves in her, and the most exquisite pride was there upon its throne. Astonishment will be felt at what I am going to say, and yet nothing is more strictly true; it is that at the bottom of her soul she believed that she, the bastard of the king, had much honored the Duc d'Orléans in marrying him! The Duc d'Orléans often laughed at her pride, and called her 'Madame Lucifer' in speaking to her, and she admitted that the name did not displease her. She always received his advances with coldness and a sort of superiority of greatness. She was a princess to the backbone, at all hours and in all places. Yet, at the same time, her timidity was extreme. The king could have made her feel ill with a single severe look." [1]

Madame has drawn a portrait of the Duchesse de Chartres, her most unwelcome daughter-in-law. "In my opinion," says she, "my son's wife has no charms at all. I don't know whether my son loves her much, but I know she does what she pleases with him. . . . She paints beyond all measure, so that she is often quite red. She is often ill, and always has a fictitious malady in reserve. I believe that all her indispositions and weaknesses come because she always lies in bed or

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 337.

Mademoiselle de Blois

Duchesse de Chartres and Duchesse d'Orléans

on a sofa; she eats and drinks reclining, through mere idleness. . . . She is so indolent that she will not stir; she would like larks ready roasted to drop into her mouth. She is so vain that she thinks she has more sense than her husband, who has a great deal." [1]

The Duc and Duchesse de Chartres lived with Monsieur and Madame at St. Cloud or in Paris at the Palais Royal. At Versailles they had apartments in the south wing of the château.

[1] Memoirs of the Duchesse d'Orléans, p. 175.

VIII

THE KING'S CHILDREN

THE children the king had had by his mistresses were a source of continual difficulty at court. Louis never neglected any of his children; they might be illegitimate, but he never on that account failed in his responsibility toward them as a father and a king. By the Duchesse de la Vallière, he had had the Comte de Vermandois and Mlle. de Blois; by Madame de Montespan, eight children, four of whom died rather young, leaving the Duc du Maine, Mlle. de Nantes, a second Mlle. de Blois, and the Comte de Toulouse. The Comte de Vermandois died in 1683. The king had then three daughters and two sons to provide for. He declared them legitimate, married his daughters to princes of the blood, and loaded his sons with honors; but these things were not accomplished without scandal and hubbub.

The first Mlle. de Blois, daughter of La Vallière, was married to Louis-Armand I, Prince de Conti, and ere long was left a widow. At Versailles she was called La Grande Princesse de Conti, on account of her beauty and height. "She was the one of the king's illegitimate daughters whom he loved most," says the Palatine. "She was by far the most polite and well bred." Monseigneur liked her also. "When he was not at the chase, Monseigneur passed his time with the Princesse de Conti." In addition to her apartments in the château, the Princesse de Conti had her town house in Ver-

sailles, the Hôtel de Conti, to-day the town-hall of Versailles, where she gave many fêtes, especially to the Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne. She disliked her half-sisters, daughters of Madame de Montespan, and they, in their turn, disliked her.

Mlle. de Nantes, eldest daughter of Madame de Montespan, was married to Louis de Bourbon, son of the Prince de Condé. He was Duc de Bourbon; called, for short Monsieur le Duc, and she, Mme. la Duchesse. "She is not prettier than her daughters," says the Palatine, "but she has more grace. Her manners are more fascinating and agreeable. Her wit shines in her eyes, but there is some malignity in them also. I always say she is like a very pretty cat, which, while you play with it, lets you feel its claws. No person has a better carriage of the head. It is impossible to dance better than the duchess and her daughters can, but the mother dances best. I do not know how it is, but even her lameness is becoming to her. She has a talent of saying things in so pleasant a manner that one cannot help laughing. If she were not so treacherous, one might say truly that nobody is more amiable. But there is nothing certain about her; although her sense is good, her heart is not." [1]

The second Mlle. de Blois, daughter of Madame de Montespan, was married, as has already been said, to the king's nephew, Philippe, Duc de Chartres.

The sisters were not on good terms. "Monsieur wished that the Duchesse de Chartres should always call the others 'sister,' but that they should never address her except as 'Madame.' The Princesse de Conti submitted to this, but Mme. la Duchesse set herself to call the Duchesse de Chartres '*mignonne*.' But nothing was less *mignonne* than her face and figure; and Monsieur, feeling the ridicule for his daughter-in-law, complained to the king. The king prohibited

[1] Memoirs of Elizabeth-Charlotte, Duchesse d'Orléans, p. 257.

very severely this familiarity. . . . While at Trianon, the princesses took it into their heads to walk out at night and divert themselves with crackers. Either from malice or imprudence, they let off some one night under the windows of Monsieur, rousing him thereby out of his sleep. He was so displeased that he complained to the king, who made him many excuses and scolded the princesses. Monsieur's anger lasted a long time, and the Duchesse de Chartres felt it. I do not know if the other two were very sorry. Mme. la Duchesse was accused of writing some songs upon the Duchesse de Chartres. . . . One summer the king took to going very often in the evening to Trianon, and gave permission once for all to all the court to follow him. There was a grand collation for the princesses, his daughters, who took their friends there, and indeed all the women went to it if they pleased. One day the Duchesse de Gesvres took it into her head to go to Trianon and partake of this meal. Her age, her rarity at court, her dress, and her face provoked the princesses to make fun of her in whispers with their fair visitors. She perceived this, and, without being embarrassed, took them up so sharply that they were silenced and looked down. But this was not all; after the collation she began to talk so freely and yet so humorously about them that they were frightened, and went and made their excuses, and very frankly asked for quarter. Madame de Gesvres was good enough to grant them this, but said it was only on condition that they learned how to behave. . . . At Marly one evening after the king had gone to bed, and while Monseigneur was playing cards in the salon, the Duchesse de Chartres and Mme. la Duchesse, who were bound together by their mutual aversion for the Princesse de Conti, sat down to a supper in the chamber of the first-named. Monseigneur, upon retiring late to his own room, found them smoking pipes, which they had sent for from the Swiss Guards! Knowing what would

Mademoiselle de Blois, La Grande Princesse de Conti

happen if the smell were discovered, he made them leave off, but the smoke had betrayed them. Next day the king scolded them severely, at which the Princesse de Conti triumphed. Nevertheless, these broils multiplied, and the king at last grew so weary of them that one evening he called the princesses before him, and said that if they did not improve he would banish them all from court. This measure had its effect; calm and decorum returned, and supplied the place of friendship." [1]

The Duc du Maine, eldest son of the king and Madame de Montespan, was always a favorite with Madame de Maintenon, who had been his governess from his birth. He was probably not as black as Saint-Simon has painted him; but with the army he was a craven, and showed the white feather in disgraceful fashion, and at court he was a tale-bearer and a sneak. He was devoured by ambition, and in the king's old age he joined hands with Madame de Maintenon in forcing a will from the king, appointing him the guardian of the heir to the throne, by which he hoped to weaken the power of the Duc d'Orléans as regent—in fact, to control the government himself.

"The unfortunate state in which the king was left after the death of the Duchesse de Bourgogne," says Saint-Simon, "made him seek relief everywhere, in abandoning himself more and more to Madame de Maintenon and M. du Maine. They soon managed to obtain possession of him, leaving no art unexhausted in order to flatter, to please, and to interest him. He was made to believe that M. du Maine was utterly without ambition; like a good father of a family, solely occupied with his children, touched with the grandeur of his nearness to the king, simple, frank, upright, and one who after working at his duties all day, and giving himself time for prayer and piety, amused himself in hunting, and drew

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 83.

upon his natural gaiety and cheerfulness, without knowing anything of the court, or of what was passing! Compare this portrait with his real character, and we shall feel with terror what a rattlesnake was introduced into the king's privacy. Everything smiled upon the project of M. du Maine and Madame de Maintenon. They had rendered M. d'Orléans odious in the eyes of the king by the most execrable calumnies. M. du Maine wished not only to be made prince of the blood, but to be made guardian of the heir to the throne, so as to dwarf the power of the regent as much as possible. He wished, in fact, to take from M. d'Orléans everything except the name of regent, and to divide all power between himself and the Comte de Toulouse. But Madame de Maintenon and M. du Maine had tough work before they obtained this success. They found that the king would not consent to their wishes without much opposition. They hit upon a devilish plan to overpower his resistance. Hitherto, they had only been occupied in pleasing him, in praising him, in anticipating his wishes. Not being able to lead him as they wished, they determined to do so at all cost, and they adopted another system. Both became serious, oftentimes dejected, silent, furnishing nothing to the conversation, letting pass what the king forced himself to say, sometimes not even replying, if it was not a direct interrogation. In this manner all the leisure hours of the king were rendered dull and empty. . . . The few ladies who were admitted to the intimacy of the king knew not what to make of the change they saw in Madame de Maintenon. They were duped at first by the plea of illness; but seeing at last that its duration passed all bounds, that it had no intermission, that her face announced no malady, that her daily life was in no way deranged, and that the king became as serious and sad as she, they sounded each other to find out the cause. Fear lest it should be something in which they, unknowingly, were concerned, troubled them; so that they

became even worse company to the king than Madame de Maintenon. There was no relief for the king. All his resource was in the commonplace talk of the Comte de Toulouse, who was not amusing, although ignorant of the plot, and the stories of his valets, who lost tongue as soon as they perceived that they were not seconded by the Duc du Maine in his usual manner. . . . Time ran on, and the dejection of M. du Maine and Madame de Maintenon increased. This is as far as the most instructed have ever been able to penetrate. To describe the interior scenes that doubtless passed during the long time this state of things lasted, would be to write romance. Truth demands that we should relate what we know, and admit what we are ignorant of. What is certain is that cheerfulness came back all at once, with the same surprise to the witnesses of it as the long dejection had caused them, simply because they understood no more of the end than of the commencement. But to give some idea of the opposition from the king that M. du Maine and Madame de Maintenon had to overcome, and to show how reluctantly he consented to their wishes, more than one incident may be brought forward. Some days before the news transpired, the king, full of the enormity of what he had just done for his bastards, looked at them in his cabinet, in the presence of the valets and of D'Antin and D'O, and in a sharp manner that told of vexation, and with a severe glance, suddenly addressed himself to M. du Maine: 'You have wished it; but know that, however great I may make you, and you may be in my lifetime, you are nothing after me. It will be for you then to avail yourself of what I have done for you, if you can.' Everybody present trembled at a thunderclap so sudden, so little expected, so entirely removed from the character and custom of the king, and which showed so clearly the extreme ambition of the Duc du Maine, and the violence he had done to the weakness of the king, who seemed to reproach

himself for it and to reproach the bastard for his ambition and tyranny. The consternation of M. du Maine seemed extreme at this rough sally, which no previous remark had led to. The king had made a clean breast of it. Everybody fixed his eyes upon the floor, and held his breath. The silence was profound; it finished only when the king passed into the other cabinet. . . . On Sunday, the 27th of August (1714), the chief-president and the attorney-general were sent for by the king. He was at Versailles. As soon as they were alone with him, he took from a drawer, which he unlocked, a large and thick packet, sealed with seven seals. In handing it to them, the king said: 'Gentlemen, this is my will. No one but myself knows its contents. I commit it to you to keep in the Parliament, to which I cannot give a greater testimony of my esteem and confidence than by rendering it the depository of this document. The example of the kings, my predecessors, and that of the will of the king, my father, do not allow me to be ignorant of what may become of this. But they would have it; they have tormented me; they have left me no repose, whatever I might say. Very well! I have bought my repose. Here is the will; take it away; come what may of it, at least I shall have rest, and shall hear no more about it.' At the last word, he finished with a dry nod, turned his back upon them, passed into another cabinet, and left them both nearly turned to statues. They looked at each other, frozen by what they had just heard, and still more by what they had just seen in the eyes and countenance of the king; and as soon as they had collected their senses, they retired and went to Paris." [1]

The scheme of the Duc du Maine, however, failed completely after the king's death. Parliament set aside the dispositions of the will of Louis XIV in favor of his bastard, and the Duc d'Orléans assumed full control. When the news

[1] Saint-Simon, II, pp. 303–307.

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Anne Louise Bénédicte de Bourbon, Duchesse du Maine

reached Madame de Maintenon at St. Cyr, the failure of her hopes threw her into a fever. M. du Maine had married, in 1692, one of the daughters of the Prince de Condé. They lived at Sceaux, and M. du Maine died there in 1736.

Modest, upright, and brave, the Comte de Toulouse, second son of the king and Madame de Montespan, was the best of Louis's children. He served with ability in the navy, and in September, 1704, won the battle of Malaga against the English fleet, commanded by Admiral Rooke. The king loaded him with honors, but no one seems to have found fault. He was admiral, grand huntsman of France, lieutenant-general, and governor of Brittany. His modesty and courtesy made him many friends and few enemies.

The Comte de Toulouse married the widow of M. de Gondrin, and the marriage was a happy one. The life that they lived at Rambouillet, amid the scandals of the regency, was virtuous and dignified. M. de Toulouse died in 1737, leaving behind him a creditable record.

IX

THE NOBILITY

IN referring to some ceremony or fête at the court, the expression is frequently used by Saint-Simon and others, "All France was there." There was less exaggeration in the phrase than might at first appear. Very few people of distinction were absent, and if absent, they made haste to return. If they were persons of quality, if they wished to maintain their standing, if they had sons and daughters to marry and settle in life, if they desired for themselves and for their children some portion of this world's goods, they found it necessary to reside at court. If they attempted to remain in their châteaux in the provinces, they lost caste, they had no society save that of village rustics, their sons had no careers, their daughters no chances to marry well, they were rated as being too poor to go to court, or as having incurred the displeasure of the king. Afar the stream of glittering life flowed on, but they stuck in a stagnant pool; and when from the depths of their stagnation they sent some soft-voiced messenger to plead their cause, his spine was chilled by the icy answer of the royal lips, "I do not know them. They are people I never see." Under such circumstances, those who had the chance to choose did not hesitate to quit the *noblesse de province* for the *noblesse de cour*. Versailles! All roads led to it. In the great château, as in a reservoir, were riches and honors and all rank.

The policy begun by Louis in 1661 was well established

and had borne fruit by the time Versailles became the seat of government. Throughout France there was not a single estate of any size the proprietor of which was not at court. The new hôtels of the nobility lined the streets near the royal palace, and their owners filled its salons and formed each day a cortège for the king. The fathers of these men had fought Richelieu; their ancestors had flung their banners to the breeze and marched in mail to battle with a King of France who was little more than King of Paris. But now, after the struggle of centuries, the monarchy had come to its own at last. Each morning when the king went to mass, an obsequious nobility awaited him in the gallery of Versailles. They were all there; all, at least, whose purses were not empty. "Sire," said M. de Vardes to Louis XIV, "away from Your Majesty, one is not only miserable but ridiculous."

But such concentration imposed a heavy load upon the sovereign; it was the price he had to pay for his absolutism. As Taine has well said, "A nobility for useful purposes is not transformed with impunity into a nobility for ornament. . . . To be the master of a house is not an easy task, especially when several thousand persons are to be entertained. . . . The king is expected to keep the entire aristocracy busy, consequently to make a display of himself, to pay back with his own person at all hours. It is the life of an actor who is on the stage the entire day." [1]

The nobility had their price to pay. The cost of living at court ate up their incomes; their continued absence from their estates made their revenues diminish, left their châteaux neglected, and much of their land uncultivated; high play plunged them into debt. A few years brought the inevitable, and they became dependent on the royal bounty. When they looked for support to the salaries attached to their posts at

[1] Taine, The Ancient Régime, p. 104.

court, and to the king's pensions, the last traces of their independence vanished.

They numbered in all some 160,000 persons, some 25,000 or 30,000 noble families in a nation of 25,000,000 people, upon whom they looked haughtily and indifferently, by whom they were disliked, and from whom they still demanded feudal tribute though they themselves had ceased to render feudal service. Thus they took something and gave nothing in return, an evil which in succeeding generations would bring catastrophe. But the day of ruin was distant and undreamed of. Absorbed in the etiquette and intrigues of Versailles, the *noblesse de cour* had neither time nor inclination to think of anything else. State affairs were not for them, but for the monarch and his ministers, in councils from which they were excluded. With the establishments they had to maintain, their valets and lackeys, their equipages, their costumes, their high play, they were always in debt, and the poverty in the provinces affected them in so far only as it reduced their incomes. They very rarely came in contact with the peasants on their estates, and had therefore little personal interest in them. Had they resided on their estates, they would probably have taken a different attitude, but as it was, whenever they received unpleasant reports from their intendants, the poverty was distant and disagreeable. Duties at Versailles, on the other hand, were real and pressing. One was hoping to get the post of gentleman usher to the Duc de Bourgogne, but Madame de Maintenon had never smiled on him, and so he was hurrying hither and thither to find some person with influence enough to win her over; another was all upset because somebody had taken precedence of her at the king's supper, and was trying to make her husband complain to the king; a third was wondering if he would get the royal candlestick at the *coucher;* a fourth was bound to have the position of lady of honor to one of the princesses, and was raising

Henri de Latour d'Auvergne, Maréchal de Turenne

heaven and earth to spite a fifth who had set her cap for the same post. There were hundreds of others busy about just such matters, and all these things were vital. Versailles produced its type, the grand seigneur, "polished but hard as marble." He was master of his features and his emotions; he smiled alike on friends and enemies; he concealed his thoughts and disguised his passions; he knew when to speak and when to sigh and when to be silent; he was alert and on his guard; he had wit and charm; his pose and manners were perfect; he measured men to the fraction of an inch and appeared only with those from whom something was to be gained. But, above all, he had the court air. "The court air is contagious," says La Bruyère. "It pervades Versailles as the Norman accent pervades Rouen or Falaise. It appears in the lackeys, in the grooms of the Stables, in the people of the Fruit-loft."

At the head of the nobility came the princes of the blood. Henri Jules de Bourbon, Prince de Condé, called for short M. le Prince, had the prestige of his father, the Great Condé, and a splendid establishment at Chantilly; but M. le Prince himself, though not without ability, was choleric and eccentric to the last degree, and was thoroughly disliked by everybody. His son, M. le Duc de Bourbon, was no better; "a marvelously little man, short, without being fat, of a livid yellow, nearly always looked furious, and was so proud, and so audacious, that it was difficult to get used to him."[1] Although the king had married his daughter, Mlle. de Nantes, to M. le Duc, His Majesty could endure neither the son nor the father. M. le Prince de Conti, on the other hand, was popular. "He endeavored to please the cobbler, the lackey, the porter, as well as the minister of state, the grand seigneur, the general, and all so naturally that success was certain. He was consequently the constant delight of every one."[2]

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 120. [2] Idem, II, p. 67.

A fine example of the best type of grand seigneur was the Duc de Beauvilliers, governor of the *Enfants de France.* The Duc de la Rochefoucauld, grand huntsman of France, never missing the king's *lever* or *coucher* for ten years in succession, was the perfect courtier. The Duc de Lauzun had a sharp tongue, and his whole life was filled with surprising adventures. The Duc de Gesvres was a malicious old man, who had sprung from almost nothing and was not ashamed of it. The Maréchal Duc de Villeroi, who entered always with his grand air and his "accustomed hubbub," was "full of wind, lightness, and frivolity." [1] The Duchesse de Nemours, who was extremely rich, had a "droll way of dressing, big eyes, a shoulder that twitched constantly, gray hairs which she wore flowing, and an imposing air." [2] The haughty Duc de Vendôme was a bad general and a base profligate. The Bishop of Orléans was a man "whose face spoke at once of the virtue and benignity he possessed. Young and old were afraid to say a foul word in his presence." [3] The Duc d'Elbœuf was a good courtier, but deplored the advancement of the king's illegitimate children. The Duc de Luxembourg was brilliant in battle, but out of it was "idleness itself." The Maréchal de Boufflers was brave, virtuous, and magnificent in hospitality. The Chevalier de Coislin was a cynic, who went out of his way to avoid meeting the king. The Comtesse de Mailly had wit, but could never overcome her "provincial awkwardness." The handsome and sprightly Maréchale de Rochefort was "full of worldly cleverness, but with little cleverness of any other kind." [4] M. de Villars, "one of the best-made men in France," had a reputation for courage and skill. The Cardinal de Bouillon was full of pride and pretension. M. de Duras had put himself on such a footing that he said anything he pleased. M. de

[1] Saint-Simon, III, p. 227.
[2] Idem, I, p. 379.
[3] Idem, I, p. 81.
[4] Idem, I, p. 18.

Puysieux, for some time ambassador to Switzerland, "a little fat man and very agreeable," was "the best fellow in the world." [1] The Prince d'Harcourt "looked like a nobleman, but reminded one at the same time of a country actor." [2] The Comtesse de Fiesque was full of odd fancies, passed her life with the most frivolous, "frittering away all her substance, and allowing herself to be pillaged by her business people." Harlay, Chief-President of Parliament, was a "perfect hypocrite; affecting a bending attitude, shaving along the walls to make people make way for him with greater noise, and working his way at Versailles by a series of respectful and, as it were, shamefaced bows to the right and left." [3] M. de Langlée had made himself such a "master of fashions and fêtes that none of the latter were given, even by the princes of the blood, except under his directions." The Comtesse de La Marck was "tall, stout, and coarse-featured as a Swiss guard in woman's clothes; bold, audacious, talking loudly and always with authority; polished, however, and of good manners when she pleased; the most imperious woman in the world." [4]

Such were a few of the thousands who trod the pavement of the court, who waited in the gallery, in the morning, to accompany the king to mass, who promenaded in the park, who plotted in the antechambers. They would long ago have been forgotten, and all traces of them would have vanished, but for the surpassing talent of one man. Louis de Rouvroy, Duc de Saint-Simon, rescued them from oblivion.

THE DUC DE SAINT-SIMON

Louis de Saint-Simon, only child of Claude, Duc de Saint-Simon, by his second wife, Charlotte de l'Aubespine, was born on the 15th of January, 1675, and until the death of his

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 315.
[2] Idem, I, p. 254.
[3] Idem, I, p. 44.
[4] Idem, I, p. 160.

father bore the name of Vidame de Chartres. In 1691 he was presented for the first time to the king. "My father took me to Versailles, where he had not been for many years, and begged of the king admission for me into the Musketeers. It was on the day of St. Simon and St. Jude, at half-past twelve, and just as His Majesty came out of the council. The king did my father the honor of embracing him three times, and then turned toward me. Finding that I was little and of delicate appearance, he said I was still very young; to which my father replied that I should be able in consequence to serve longer." [1]

But Saint-Simon did not serve long. He was brave enough, and at Neerwinden he led five cavalry charges; but army life was not to his taste, and because he did not receive the promotion to which he thought his ducal rank entitled him, he resigned his commission. "Well, monsieur, here is another man who quits us," said the king to Chamillart. Louis was piqued. The first time that the young duke appeared at Versailles after this episode, the king overwhelmed him by a single act of politeness. He heard himself named at the *coucher* to hold the royal candlestick. After that the king neither spoke to him nor looked at him for two years. Saint-Simon married a daughter of the Maréchal de Lorges. She was a woman of fine character and much good sense, and her tact, together with the duke's scheming, brought him again into some appearance of favor.

The chief aim of Saint-Simon's existence was to advance the power of the dukes. To him the ducal dignity was the one thing, and the only thing, of importance in the state, and in attempting to advance the ducal order, Saint-Simon clashed continually with the Grand Monarch. "Since you left my service," said the king, coldly, in one interview, "you think of nothing but studying ranks and bringing actions

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 3.

By permission of Braun, Clement & Co.

Louis de Rouvroy, Duc de Saint-Simon, at the Age of Fourteen

against all the world. If I were wise, I would send you so far off that you would not worry me for a long time." Saint-Simon had the courage of his convictions, and did not wilt even before this blast. He continued his intrigues in behalf of the dukes, and his political caliber may be measured by the attitude he took at the king's death. "I went to the Duc d'Orléans, whom I found shut in, but all his apartments so full that a pin could not have fallen to the ground. I talked of the Convocation of the States-General, and reminded him of a promise he had given me that he would allow the dukes to keep their hats on when their votes were taken. All I could obtain from him was another promise that when public affairs of pressing moment awaiting attention were disposed of, we should have all we required." [1] At such a time, the right of the dukes to wear their hats on a particular occasion was the main thing in Saint-Simon's mind.

However, it is not as a political man that Saint-Simon is interesting, but as biographer and historian of the court. In that capacity he stands without a peer. He spared no one, not even himself; he was vindictive, but he was always brilliant. With his marvelous grasp of detail, nothing escaped him, while his lofty intelligence and all-seeing eye revealed the motives of men. One can fancy with what astonishment the Grand Monarch would have received the information that he and his court would be best known to future generations through the genius of a busybody, who spent his time quibbling about ducal rights.

[1] Saint-Simon, III, p. 32.

X

MECHANISM OF THE COURT LIFE

THE court of Versailles was no longer that of St. Germain, coming from time to time to glitter at Versailles in tilts and fêtes in honor of La Vallière or Montespan. Since 1682 Versailles had become the seat of government, the royal house, headquarters of pomp, and home of majesty. Beside Louis the Magnificent appeared Maintenon the Sanctimonious, and behind them, erect, rigid, like a man at arms, stood Etiquette, immovable, absolute, supreme. For the new Versailles they were the new Trinity, by whom all things were done, without whom nothing could be done. The new court had increased in numbers, had gained in luxury, and moved in prodigious splendor, but its life was rigorous, monotonous, and fatiguing.

The occupations and pleasures of the royal family and of the courtiers changed three times a year, dividing the year into three periods, the winter and the carnival, Lent, spring and summer.

In winter they had the *appartement,* comedy, concerts, balls, play (gambling), and masquerades; during the carnival the number of balls and masquerades was doubled. The *appartements,* that is to say, the evening receptions of the king, were held every week, from the beginning of October until Palm Sunday. As a rule, the evenings of each week during the winter were regulated as follows: on Sunday,

appartement; on Monday, comedy; on Tuesday, nothing; on Wednesday, *appartement;* on Thursday, comedy, and so on, every third evening being free. When snow fell, there were promenades in sledges in the park or on the grand canal. Almost every day came the chase, the stag-hunts of the king, the wolf-hunts of Monseigneur, or of the Duc de Berry, in the forest of St. Germain, in the woods of Meudon, in the woods of Versailles; or the shooting parties in the parks of Versailles and Marly. Only such severe cold as that of the terrible winter of 1709 could stop the hunt.

In summer there were promenades in gondolas with music on the canal, promenades in the Orangery, promenades in the gardens, on foot, on horse, and in carriages, collations and concerts at Trianon or at the Menagerie, visits to the Stables to see equerries mount new horses, and, as always, the chase — the stag-hunt or the shooting party.

At fixed epochs came the journeys *(les voyages)* to Compiègne and Fontainebleau: Compiègne, in the spring; Fontainebleau, in the autumn. The diversions there were the same as at Versailles, the chase, the promenade, comedy, concerts, balls, play; but in addition, at Fontainebleau the court watched games of tennis and mall, hunted the stag in the toils, and rode to Franchart, where they dined. At Compiègne there were frequently camps and reviews of the army. Journeys to Marly occurred at all seasons, and there, with fewer people and less etiquette, they had comedy, concerts, balls, chase, and play.

At fixed epochs, also, came the religious fêtes, the procession of Corpus Christi, the jubilee, Holy Week, and, from time to time, periods of mourning to break the regular train of the court life. Grand ceremonies, receptions of ambassadors, of flags taken from the enemy, ceremonies of the Order of St. Esprit and the admission of new knights, royal marriages and marriage-fêtes, set in motion all vanities and

caused continual disputes and difficulties as to precedence, rank, and place.

Daily and in all seasons, there were the *lever* and *coucher* of the king, the mass, the dinner and supper of the king, chase or promenade, play or collation.

Each of these events — the *lever,* the chase, the promenade — was a bit of gorgeous color. The reception of an ambassador, a ball in the grand gallery, were scenes of unrivaled magnificence. At all times and in all places, the complicated and glittering mechanism of the court placed the majestic figure of the King of France in a setting of supreme splendor. It was unique and wonderful. It was not created, however, to promote the individual happiness of its ten thousand component parts, but to produce dazzling results by numbers and by combinations of colors. "The province," says La Bruyère, "is the viewpoint from which the court appears truly admirable. If one approaches, its charms diminish, as those of a landscape that are seen too near."

The first duty of a courtier was to see the king each day as often as possible. "I paid my court to the king," wrote the Duc de Lauzun, "and I hunted him very punctually." "I scarcely saw the king once a day," wrote Saint-Simon, at the time of his agitation at the illness of the Duc de Bourgogne. To see the king once a day was nothing. He must be seen at the *lever* and at the *coucher,* at dinner and at supper, at the promenade, and if possible when he changed his coat and boots. In this particular the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, grand huntsman of France, was the type of the perfect courtier. "He never missed the king's *lever* and *coucher,* both changes of dress every day, the hunts and the promenades, likewise every day, for ten years in succession, never sleeping away from the place where the king was, and yet on a footing to demand leave." If one was to make one's way at court, this assiduity was essential. The eye of the master

never failed to note the present and the absent. " His Majesty looked to the right and to the left, not only at his *lever* and *coucher,* but at his meals, in passing through his apartments, or his gardens of Versailles. He saw and noticed everybody; not one escaped him, not even those who hoped to remain unnoticed. He marked well all absentees from court, found out the reason for their absence, and never lost an opportunity of acting toward them as occasion might seem to justify." In the face of such omniscience, only the fool absented himself from *lever,* mass, or promenade, thinking that in the crowd the king would never know. Never know? Take for example that scene at the birth of the Duc de Bourgogne. " Although the chamber was filled with the princes and princesses of the blood, and a large number of other people whose presence was necessary for the service, the king, judging that the moment of the delivery was near, and with that presence of mind which never fails him, saw at a glance, in spite of the number of persons crowded in the chamber, that M. le Prince de Conti was not there. He gave orders that he should be summoned immediately."

Since so large a number of people were involved in the king's daily life, it was necessary that they should know each morning what his movements were to be, and that he should be punctual. His Majesty was punctuality itself. After his *lever* he passed into his cabinet. " He found there or was followed by all who had the *entrées,* a very numerous company, for it included everybody in any office. He gave orders to each for the day. Thus within half a quarter of an hour it was known what he meant to do, and then all this crowd left directly." The courtiers could then plan their day. They must attend mass, which came shortly after the *lever,* and they were then free, while the king was in council, until one o'clock, when the king dined. They were expected to be present at the dinner; the mechanism of the court gave

them nothing to eat at that hour, but they stood in the royal bedchamber, and formed a brilliant background. They dined in their apartments in the château, or in their hôtels in Versailles, before or after the king's dinner, as they pleased. But aside from obligation, self-interest made the courtiers crowd to the king's dinner, because immediately after it His Majesty granted audiences to the nobility, before he went to walk or drive or hunt. In the afternoon the courtiers were free unless there was a promenade, in which case, at Versailles and Trianon, all the courtiers were expected to be present; at Marly only the chief officers followed the king to the promenade. If there was a stag-hunt, only those were allowed to go who had obtained permission once for all, and leave to wear the blue uniform with gold and silver lace. When the king returned from the chase and changed his dress, a few courtiers were present, distinguished people whom it pleased the first gentleman of the Chamber to admit. This gave opportunity to speak a word or two to the king almost in private, and was a privilege much sought after, and granted to few. The majority of the courtiers were free until the king's supper at ten o'clock, when all the court, sitting or standing, formed the background for the supper-table of the royal family. About midnight the ceremony of the *coucher,* at which all the courtiers were expected to be present, closed the day.

Attendance at court performances was compulsory. " News reached the court, which was at Fontainebleau, that M. de Duras was at the point of death. Upon hearing this, Madame de Saint-Simon and Madame de Lauzun, who were both related to M. de Duras, wished to absent themselves from the comedy that was to be given in the palace that evening. They expressed this wish to Madame de Bourgogne, who approved of it, but said she was afraid the king would not do the same. He had been very angry of late because some

ladies had neglected to go in full dress to the court performance; and the few words he had spoken made everybody take good care not to rouse his anger on this point again. Madame de Bourgogne was afraid that he would not consent to dispense with the attendance of Madame de Saint-Simon and Madame de Lauzun on this occasion. They compromised the matter, therefore, by dressing themselves, going to the apartment where the performance was held, and, under pretext of not finding places, going away. Madame de Bourgogne agreed to explain in this way their absence to the king."[1] If in the case of a dying relative it was so difficult to manage the matter, it may easily be seen that on ordinary occasions no excuse was accepted from a person who was well enough to walk. The court must march, at all times and in all seasons. If the *lever* and *coucher,* the comedy, the collation, the promenade, were each day to be equally brilliant, the court must march. If the setting in which the King of France moved was to maintain a uniform splendor, the court must march. The king must march, likewise. He did so with the regularity of the sun, his emblem. Those were wise words he addressed to his cousin, Mlle. de Montpensier, when he went to see her new house at Choisy. He blamed her for not ornamenting the façade. "We have no right to be careless," said he. "Since universal agreement has made us what we are, we must know how to carry our burden, and we must lay it down at no time and in no place." That was his standard, and he lived up to it; but to carry the burden required his vigor, his constitution, the firmness of his nerves, and his power of accomplishing work in spite of the trammels of etiquette. His successors staggered under the load.

The mechanism of the king's life was so perfect that, with a watch in the hand, it was possible for one to tell on any day in the year and at any hour of the day what His Majesty was

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 314.

doing. Saint-Simon notes a trifle like the following: "The last evening of this year (1708) was very remarkable, because there had not yet been an example of any such thing. The king having retired after supper to his cabinet as usual with his family, Chamillart came without being sent for. He whispered in the king's ear that he had a long despatch from the Maréchal de Boufflers. Immediately the king said good night to Monseigneur and the princesses, who went out with every one else; and the king actually worked for an hour with his minister before going to bed, so excited was he by the great project for retaking Lille!" He worked every evening with his ministers in the apartments of Madame de Maintenon from seven o'clock until ten, when he went to supper. What makes this case so astounding in Saint-Simon's eyes is the fact that on the night in question the king worked between eleven and twelve. It was "very remarkable, because there had not yet been an example of any such thing." Those few words speak volumes for the mechanism. Note this also. The king was on the way to his carriage to go to the hunt. M. de Duras, who was in waiting, made a statement about a certain matter. "At this, the king stopped, and turning round, a thing he scarcely ever did in walking, replied." The fact that so slight a check in the royal progress is noted and commented upon, shows with what mathematical precision the Grand Monarch moved.

In addition to seeing the king as often as possible, the courtiers had to be up betimes. The royal *lever* was at eight o'clock, but the true courtier was also at the *lever* of Monseigneur, or at those of the princes of the blood, which came earlier, because the princes and Monseigneur had to be at the *lever* of the king, and promptly at eight, too, since they had the first *entrée*. "At what hour will monsieur be called?" inquired the valet of the Maréchal de Noailles, one night, as he closed his master's bed-curtains. "At eight

Louis XIV, the Princess Palatine, and Madame de Maintenon receiving the Electoral Prince of Saxony

o'clock, if no one dies during the night." If any one died, there was not a moment to be lost in asking for his place. Take the case of La Vrillière. "Chateauneuf, Secretary of State, died about this time (1700). He had asked that his son, La Vrillière, might be allowed to succeed him, and was much vexed that the king refused this favor. The news of Chateauneuf's death was brought to La Vrillière by a courier at five o'clock in the morning. He did not lose his wits at the news, but at once sent and woke up the Princesse d'Harcourt, and begged her to come and see him instantly. Opening his purse, he prayed her to go to see Madame de Maintenon as soon as she got up, and propose his marriage with Mlle. de Mailly, whom he would take without dowry if the king gave him his father's appointments. The Princesse d'Harcourt, whose habit it was to accept any sum, from a crown upward, willingly undertook this business. She went to Madame de Maintenon immediately, and then repaired to Madame de Mailly, who, without property, and burdened with sons and daughters, was in no way adverse to the marriage. The king, upon getting up, was duly made acquainted with La Vrillière's proposal, and at once agreed to it." Thus we see La Vrillière, learning the news of his father's death at five o'clock in the morning, buying the services of the Princesse d'Harcourt, securing Madame de Maintenon and Madame de Mailly, and having everything cut and dried by eight o'clock, when the king woke and learned of the death of Chateauneuf. That was to be up betimes. La Vrillière had three hours to effect his combination, but wonderful combinations were often made at court in much less time. As a rule, then, at Versailles the courtier, who made his way and was alive to his interests, was up and dressed and ready for action by seven o'clock in the morning.

For women there were the same duties toward the queen that men performed toward the king, and when the queen

died, the duties were toward the dauphine, who held court in her place. The public toilet of the dauphine demanded the presence of both men and women. At her dinner the dauphine was served by women only; she supped always with the king and the royal family in the king's antechamber. At Versailles women did not appear at the king's dinner, except on rare occasions when he dined *au grand couvert.* At Marly, however, the king dined always with the ladies invited there.

The old courtier who gave to a novice the following rules for success at court, " Speak well of everybody, ask for every vacant place, and sit down when you can," touched, in the last, upon that phase of the mechanism which made court life so fatiguing. Standing continually is very wearisome, and at Versailles a courtier could rarely sit down. Etiquette forbade him to sit in the antechambers, in the state apartments, and in the gallery. He stood at the royal *lever* and *coucher,* at the dinner and supper, at the assembly, at the ball, at the toilet of Mme. la Dauphine. He could sit at mass, at the comedy, and at the card-table; but the relaxation thus afforded was slight, after all. He passed his days on his feet.

The triumph of the mechanism, and that phase of it which made it possible for the king to detect the absent almost at a glance, was the fact that at all times, not only at ceremonies, but at balls and diversions, it preserved the relative value of its component parts. Take for example the arrangement at a ball, as given by Saint-Simon: " The balls at Versailles were always in the form of a quadrilateral. At one side, in the center, was the arm-chair of the king, and at either side of it, on the same line, the seats for the royal family, as far as and including the rank of grandson of France. Sometimes in derangement of this order, in the midst of the ball, Mme. la Duchesse and Mme. la Princesse de Conti approached, under pretext of speaking with some one at the

side, and took the last places. Titled ladies, and then the others, without being mixed, occupied the long sides of the quadrilateral, and on the side opposite to the king were those who danced, princes of the blood and others. The princes who did not dance stood with the courtiers behind the ladies." Thus we see that at a ball the relative value of the component parts was as carefully preserved as at the *lever,* or at the supper *au grand couvert,* or at the reception of an ambassador. If Mme. la Duchesse moved from one stool to another, it deranged the order.

This was the true triumph of the mechanism; its combinations preserved their relative values, and meant something at every moment. Take the dukes, for example. When they appear, this is their order: the Duc d'Elbœuf, the Duc de Montbazon, the Duc de Ventadour, the Duc de Vendôme, the Duc de la Trémoille, the Duc de Sully, the Duc de Chevreuse, the Duc de Brissac, the Duc de Richelieu, the Duc de Saint-Simon, the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, and so on. They stand in two lines, and for convenience we may number them from one to twenty, and from twenty-one to forty. They form a brilliant picture and a perfect combination. But let number five step behind number eight, let number twelve change places with number fourteen, let number thirty pass in front of number twenty-seven, and though the men remain the same, and the picture equally brilliant, the combination no longer means anything; they are, as Saint-Simon so frequently puts it, "in confusion as to rank and precedence, without example," confusion fit to astound a king and horrify a grand master of ceremonies.

Thus at Versailles the watchwords were order, harmony, and the preservation of relative values, and these were achieved by the most marvelous mechanism ever devised by the mind of man for a like purpose. Perfect as it was, however, it could not display the uniform harmony of the

heavenly bodies. Human nature cannot always express, in lines and in half-circles, mysterious combinations. At a ball in the grand gallery, at the marriage of the Duc de Bourgogne, we find that " there was such a crowd, and such disorder, that even the king was inconvenienced, and Monsieur was pushed and knocked about in the crush. How other people fared may be imagined. No place was kept, strength or chance decided everything, people squeezed in where they could. This spoiled all the fête." On that occasion, and on others, despite mechanism and masters of ceremonies, the eternal savage in man came to the front, even in the palace and presence of the Sun King.

XI

MANNERS AND MORALS OF THE COURTIERS

FOR the court the Grand Monarch himself set the standard of manners. He might express his displeasure by a glance that terrified, by a silence that froze, by a *lettre-de-cachet* that sent an offender to the Bastille, but he never failed in courtesy. "Never was man so naturally polite, or of a politeness so measured, so graduated, so adapted to person, time, and place." It might be possible to question his ability as a warrior, his wisdom as a statesman, even his duty as a king, but there could never be the slightest question as to his being the first gentleman of his realm. He was the type, and whenever a courtier failed in dignity, in tact, in grace, in courtesy, he fell short of the model that moved before his eyes. It was, however, almost impossible for the courtiers to display in their words and actions the naturalness that accompanied the king. He was above all and supreme. He rose or sat, he smiled or bowed, he spoke or was silent, at his pleasure. There was never any doubt in his mind as to his attitude; there were constant difficulties in their minds as to their attitudes. His rank was unquestioned; their ranks clashed constantly. He was serene; they were anxious. On the other hand, they felt no sense of responsibility for public affairs; he had to bear the burden of the faults of his lieutenants. They could retire and relax; he was always on the stage.

His courtesy never contradicted itself. When the mar-

riage of the Duc de Chartres and Mlle. de Blois was announced, Madame, full of fury that her son was to wed the monarch's illegitimate daughter, forgot herself at supper. "I remarked," says Saint-Simon, "that the king offered Madame nearly all the dishes that were before him, and that she refused with an air of rudeness which did not, however, check his politeness. It was furthermore noticeable that, after leaving the table, he made to Madame a very marked and very low reverence, during which she performed so complete a pirouette that the king, on raising his head, found nothing but her back before him, removed about a step further toward the door." The second example is given by the Palatine: "Christian Louis of Mecklenbourg was a notable fool. One day he demanded an audience of the king, under pretense of having something of importance to say to him. Louis XIV was then more than forty years old. When the duke found himself in the king's presence, he said to him, 'Sire, you seem to me to have grown.' The king smiled, and said, 'Monsieur, I am past the age of growing.' 'Sire,' rejoined the duke, 'do you know people say I am very much like you, and quite as good-looking as you are?' 'That is is very probable,' said the king, laughing. The audience being finished, the duke went away." Saint-Simon furnishes the third. The Duc de Beauvilliers was very pious. "At the army one day, during a promenade of the king, M. de Beauvilliers walked alone, a little in front. Some one remarked it, and observed, sneeringly, that he was 'meditating.' The king, who heard this, turned toward the speaker, and said, 'Yes, it is M. de Beauvilliers, one of the best men of the court and of my realm.' This sudden and short apology caused silence, and food for reflection." And as in these three cases, in dealing with an angry woman, a fool, and a faultfinder, the Grand Monarch displayed a uniform courtesy, so with all with whom he came in contact, whatever faults

he had, whatever mistakes he committed, he was ever king and gentleman.

By Louis XIV the booted roisterers and swash-bucklers of Richelieu's time were polished. Against swearing and dueling the king threw the weight of his authority, and though he could eradicate neither, he held them within bounds. At the court of St. Germain manners acquired unequaled majesty and elegance; they became superior to morals; they were all in all. The king gave rise to scandal on account of his mistresses. He went through Flanders with his wife, Marie Thérèse, the Duchesse de la Vallière, and Madame de Montespan, all in the same coach; and the peasants crowded to see the "three queens," asking one another in their simplicity if they had seen them. Louis rode at the coach door, giving to all the world the spectacle of a double adultery, as though he had been the Grand Turk himself. But with the establishment of the court in residence at Versailles, the days of scandal and of mistresses were done, as far as the monarch was concerned. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of his purpose to make good his title of Most Christian King. With him morals rose to the level of manners; with Madame de Maintenon morals were ostensibly all in all.

At Versailles etiquette and environment made manners the chief of the fine arts. "There was not a toilet there," says Taine, "an air of the head, a tone of the voice, an expression in language, which was not a masterpiece of worldly culture, the distilled quintessence of all that is exquisitely elaborated by social art. Polished as the society of Paris might be, it did not approach that; compared with the court, it seemed provincial. It is said that a hundred thousand roses are required to make an ounce of the unique perfume used by the Persian kings; such was that drawing-room, the frail vial of crystal and gold containing the substance of a human vegetation. To fill it, a great aristocracy had to be transplanted

to a hothouse and become sterile in fruit and flowers; and then, in the royal alembic, its pure sap is concentrated into a few drops of aroma. The price is excessive, but only at this price can the most delicate perfumes be manufactured." [1] The simile is beautiful, but not without exaggeration. There was more than one courtier whose manners were not a "masterpiece of worldly culture." There were some whose politeness was ludicrous, like the Duc de Coislin; there were others whose vulgarity was disgusting, like the Princesse d'Harcourt; but they were in the minority, and were exceptions to the rule.

"The Duc de Coislin was a very little man of much humor and virtue, but of a politeness that was unendurable and that passed all bounds. He had been lieutenant-general in the army. Upon one occasion, after a battle in which he had taken part, one of the Rhingraves, who had been made prisoner, fell to his lot. The Duc de Coislin wished to give up to the other his bed, which consisted, indeed, of but a mattress. They complimented each other so much, the one pressing, the other refusing, that in the end they both slept upon the ground, leaving the mattress between them. The Rhingrave in due time came to Paris and called on the Duc de Coislin. When he was going, there was such a profusion of compliments, and the duke insisted so much on seeing him out, that the Rhingrave, as a last resource, ran out of the room, and locked the door outside. M. de Coislin was not thus to be outdone. His apartments were only a few feet above the ground. He opened the window accordingly, leaped out into the court, and arrived thus at the entrance-door before the Rhingrave, who thought the devil must have carried him there." [2]

The Princesse d'Harcourt was a person of another sort: "a tall fat creature, mightily brisk in her movements, with a

[1] Taine, The Ancient Régime, p. 103. [2] Saint-Simon, I, p. 248.

complexion like milk-porridge, great ugly thick lips, and hair like tow, always sticking out and hanging down in disorder, like all the rest of her fittings-out." Her manners were in accord with her appearance. "She was a blonde Fury, nay more, a harpy; she had all the effrontery of one, all the deceit and violence, all the avarice and audacity, moreover, all the gluttony, and all the promptitude to relieve herself from the effects thereof; so that she drove out of their wits those at whose houses she dined." [1]

However, it is not with the exceptions, but with the majority, that one should deal. The great lady who "received ten persons with one curtsy, bestowing on each, by her head or by her glance, all that his rank entitled him to," [2] appeared daily at Versailles. The man who regulated his salutations with marvelous tact and dexterity — "one for women of quality, one for women of the court, one for titled women, one for women of high birth married to men beneath them" — was also in evidence. At her public toilet the Duchesse de Bourgogne rose a few inches in her chair for the princes of the blood and for the dukes and duchesses; for others she inclined her head to a greater or less degree, according to their rank, but no one was forgotten. At the conclusion of an audience with a duke, His Majesty retired with a "half bow, very smiling and very gracious," and the nobleman, with a "profound bow," withdrew the way he came. Every morning at seven o'clock the Duc de Fronsac stationed himself, by his father's command, "at the foot of a stairway leading to the chapel, simply to bow to Madame de Maintenon when she went to St. Cyr." To sit with grace upon a stool, to open a door, to take a fan, to escort a lady, holding her hand by the tips of the fingers, to leave an apartment, to descend a staircase, to enter a carriage, to make the three reverences in approaching royalty—for doing all these things,

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 133. [2] De Tilly, I, p. 24.

and a hundred others, there were certain ways, in which the courtier alone excelled, in which the Parisian found himself at fault, in which the provincial failed completely.

But if the life at Versailles promoted manners, it was not propitious to morals. The concentration of the nobility, their wealth, their idleness, the fact that they were debarred from nearly all pursuits save that of pleasure, all these things were against morals. A man of rank had his own household, his apartments, his equipages, and his society; his wife, though under the same roof, had her separate establishment. She had her post at court, her friends, her protégés, and her solicitors, and he had his; fashion regulated all that. But a man, if he chose, could spend much time in the company of his wife, and there were many notable examples — among others, the king and Madame de Maintenon, the Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne, the Duc and Duchesse de Beauvilliers, the Duc and Duchesse de Saint-Simon; on the other hand, he had every inducement to spend as little as possible. "I conducted myself," says the Duc de Lauzun, "very prudently and even deferentially with Madame de Lauzun; I had Madame de Cambis very openly, for whom I concerned myself very little; I kept the little Eugénie, whom I loved a great deal." What was true of M. de Lauzun was true of the majority, especially the generation of the Duc d'Orléans. M. de Lauzun wrote of his life at a little later period; at the time in question, however, everything would have been the same, except in one particular: he would still have had his Madame de Cambis, but not "very openly." At Versailles the king kept vice below the surface. "An extreme curiosity, or a great familiarity with things, was necessary to detect the slightest intimacy between the two sexes."

Louis could coerce his courtiers, but he could not correct them, though at times he spoke in no uncertain tones. "The year finished (1695) with the disgrace of Madame de Saint-

Mademoiselle de Chartres
Princesse de Conti

Géran. She was on the best of terms with the princesses, and as much a lover of good cheer as Madame de Chartres and Mme. la Duchesse. The latter had in the park of Versailles a little house that she called the 'Desert.' There she received very doubtful company, giving such gay repasts that the king, informed of her doings, was angry, and forbade her to continue these parties or to receive certain guests. Madame de Saint-Géran was then in the first year of her mourning, so that the king did not think it necessary to include her among the interdicted, but he intimated that he did not approve of her. In spite of this, Mme. la Duchesse, having invited her to an early supper at the 'Desert' a short time after, prolonged the meal so far into the night and with so much gaiety that it came to the ears of the king. He was in great anger, and learning that Madame de Saint-Géran had been of the party, sentenced her to be banished twenty leagues from court. Like a clever woman, she retired into a convent at Rouen, saying that, as she had been unfortunate enough to displease the king, a convent was the only place for her; and this was much approved." [1]

Since they dared not do otherwise, the courtiers were punctual in their attendance in the chapel of Versailles. Hypocrisy reigned. "They have their God and their king," says La Bruyère, "and each day at a certain hour the lords of the nation assemble in a temple which they call their church. At the end is an altar consecrated to their God, where the priests celebrate the holy mysteries. The lords form a vast circle at the foot of the altar, with their backs toward the priests, and their faces turned toward their king, whom they see on his knees in a tribune. There is in this a kind of subordination; because the people appear to adore the prince, and the prince to adore God."

In that sumptuous chapel of Versailles, the Abbé Boileau

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 95.

preached upon humility (1694), and the *Mercure* tells us that his sermon received "much praise." Père Soanen thundered against vice (1695), so much so that all pronounced it "a trumpet-blast from heaven." Bourdaloue denounced gambling (1697), and received *"grands applaudissements."* Massillon rebuked pride (1704), and they agreed that it was *"le plus beau sermon du monde."* Sermons could not save.

"A few years before his retirement, Brissac, Major of the Body-Guards, served the court ladies a nice turn. All through the winter they attended evening prayers on Thursdays and Sundays, because the king went there; and under pretense of reading their prayer-books, had little tapers before them, which cast a light on their faces, and enabled the king to recognize them as he passed. On the evenings when they knew he would not go, scarcely one of them went. One evening when the king was expected, all the ladies had arrived and were in their places, and the guards were at the doors. Suddenly Brissac appeared in the king's place, lifted his baton, and cried aloud, 'Guards of the king, withdraw, return to your quarters; the king is not coming this evening.' The guards withdrew, but after they had proceeded a short distance, they were stopped by brigadiers posted for the purpose, and told to return in a few minutes. What Brissac had said was a joke. The ladies at once began to murmur to one another; and in a moment or two all the candles were put out, and the ladies, with but few exceptions, left the chapel. Soon after the king arrived, and, much astonished to see so few ladies present, asked how it was that nobody was there. At the conclusion of the prayers Brissac related what he had done, not without dwelling on the piety of the court ladies. The king and all who accompanied him laughed heartily. The story soon spread, and these ladies would have strangled Brissac, if they had been able." [1]

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 14.

That is a delightful anecdote, and nothing could express better the piety practised at Versailles. As for the men, the attitude of the younger generation was much the same as that of the Duc d'Orléans. "One Christmas-time at Versailles, when the Duc d'Orléans accompanied the king to morning prayers and to the three midnight masses, he surprised the court by his continual application in reading a volume he had brought with him, and which appeared to be a prayer-book. The chief *femme de chambre* of Mme. la Duchesse d'Orléans, much attached to the family, and very free as all good old domestics are, transfixed with joy at M. le Duc d'Orléans's application to his book, complimented him upon it the next day in the presence of others. He allowed her to go on for some time, and then said, 'You are very silly, Madame Imbert. Do you know what I was reading? It was *Rabelais,* that I brought with me for fear of being bored.'" [1]

Thus at the king's command the courtiers marched to mass, and while undoubtedly there was some genuine piety, there was a vast amount of hypocrisy. Louis himself was in earnest, and to appreciate what his coercion held in check it is necessary to view the license and debauchery that broke out after his death, when the man who read *Rabelais* in chapel became Regent of France.

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 336.

XII

PLEASURES OF THE COURTIERS

THE ordinary pleasures and diversions of the court were the *appartement,* play (gambling), comedy, concerts, balls, collations, promenades, and the chase.

APPARTEMENT

"An *appartement,* as it was called," says Saint-Simon, "was an assemblage of all the court in the grand salon from seven o'clock in the evening until ten, when the king sat down to supper, and after ten in one of the salons at the end of the grand gallery, toward the tribune of the chapel. In the first place there was some music; then tables were placed all about for all kinds of gambling; there was a *lansquenet,* at which Monsieur and Monseigneur always played; also a billiard-table; in a word, every one was free to play with any one else, and allowed to ask for fresh tables if all the others were occupied. Beyond the billiards was a refreshment-room. All was perfectly lighted. At the outset, the king went to the *appartements* very often and played, but lately he had ceased to do so. He spent the evening with Madame de Maintenon, working with different ministers one after another; but still he wished his courtiers to attend assiduously."

The *Mercure* describes an *appartement* with more detail: "The king opens his state apartments at Versailles on Mon-

day, Wednesday, and Thursday of each week (1682), for all sorts of games, from six in the evening until ten, and these days are named *jours d'appartement.* At the hour named, each one presents himself to be received in these superb salons; but no one presents himself to whom the *entrée* has not been given. Some choose one game, others another. Some prefer to watch the players, and others to promenade to admire the assembly and the grand apartments. Although they are filled with the crowd, there are present only people of rank. Every one is at liberty to speak to every one else, but, out of respect for the king, no one talks too loud, so that the noise of the conversation is not disagreeable. The king, the queen, and all the royal family descend from their greatness to play with many people in the assembly who have never had that honor. The king goes from one table to another, and wishes no one to rise or to stop playing at his approach. When he leaves a game, some one else takes his place. People pass into the salon, where there are liqueurs and a collation. The lackeys who serve wear blue coats with silver lace. They stand behind all the gaming-tables to hand the players the cards, or the counters, or anything else they may wish. In some games, as at *trou-madame,* they save the players the trouble of keeping score; they calculate the points, and write them down. There is music, also, for those who wish to dance." [1]

This account, written in 1682, speaks of the *appartements* being held on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday; at a later period they were held on other evenings, as stated in a preceding chapter. After 1691 the king no longer went to the *appartement,* but he wished all the courtiers to be present, and in December, 1693, he was much displeased to hear that there were fewer ladies than usual at the *appartement,* especially since Monseigneur held court there in his place.

[1] Le Mercure Galant, 1682.

After 1697, on the evenings when Monseigneur was at Meudon, there was neither *appartement* nor comedy at Versailles.

PLAY

Gambling was the chief pleasure of the court. The principal games of cards were *bassette, reversi* (1686), *hoca, brelan, lansquenet* (1689), and *papillon.* They played also *tourniquet, portique, la bête, trente et quarante, cadran de l'anneau-tournant* (a game invented by Louis XIV in 1689), billiards, chess, and backgammon. In *trou-madame* and *portique,* little ivory balls were rolled through arches marked with certain numbers, or through arches into squares containing numbers, the value of which decided the gain or loss. Some of these games were in fashion only for a short period; those which held their own year after year, and at which immense sums were lost and won, were *reversi, brelan,* and *lansquenet.*

"On Saturday I was at Versailles with Villars," wrote Madame de Sévigné in 1676. "At three o'clock, the king, the queen, Monsieur, Madame, Mademoiselle, Madame de Montespan, all their suite, all the courtiers, in short all the court of France, assembled in that beautiful apartment[1] which you know. All is divinely furnished; all is magnificent. No one is too warm there,[2] and we pass from one part to another without crowding. A game of *reversi* gives form to the assembly and fixes all. The king was near Madame de Montespan, who held the card, with the queen, Monsieur, and Madame de Soubise. Dangeau and company, Langlée[3] and company, are there, and a thousand louis are on the table. They have no other counters. I watched Dangeau play, and marveled, thinking what fools we are at play in comparison with him. Nothing distracts him, he

[1] The salon of Mars. [2] It was the end of July.
[3] Dangeau and Langlée were famous players.

neglects nothing, he profits by everything, and he gains where others lose. Thus 100,000 francs in ten days, 100,000 crowns in a month, all are entered in his account-book. He asked me to take part in his game, so that I was seated very conveniently and agreeably. I saluted the king, and he returned my salutation as though I had been young and pretty. The queen spoke to me for some time of my illness. Madame de Montespan talked to me of Bourbon.[1] Her beauty is a surprising thing. . . . This agreeable confusion, without confusion, of all that is most select lasted from three until six. If couriers arrived, the king retired a moment to read his letters, and then returned. There was always music, which made a very good effect. The king talked with the ladies who are accustomed to have that honor. Finally, they stopped play at six o'clock."

Philippe de Courcillon, Marquis de Dangeau, was the most successful gambler at court; there was no game he had not mastered. "He owed his success," says Saint-Simon, "to his good looks, to the court he paid to the king's mistresses, and to a lucky stroke of fortune. The king had oftentimes been importuned to give him a lodging in the château, and one day, joking with him upon his fancy for versifying, proposed to him some very hard rimes, and promised him a lodging if he filled them up upon the spot. Dangeau accepted, thought but for a moment, performed the task, and thus gained his lodging." In face and figure Dangeau strongly resembled the king; and sometimes at masquerades, if the king went incognito, Dangeau impersonated the monarch by the king's request. His *Memoirs* show that he was something besides a card-player. His wife was a close friend of Madame de Maintenon. He held his own through every change of fortune. He was born under a lucky star.

"The king," says Dangeau, under date of November 10,

[1] A fashionable watering-place.

1686, "being at Fontainebleau, ordered a grand game of *reversi* for the *jours d'appartement* at Versailles. The king will hold one; Monseigneur and Monsieur will each hold another; and His Majesty named Langlée and myself to hold the other two. The stakes are high." The Marquis de Sourches speaks of the same game. "It was then (1686) that His Majesty decided to begin the *appartements* as soon as the court returned to Versailles, and to hold there a grand game of *reversi,* for which each player required a fund of 5000 pistoles.[1] The players are the king, Monseigneur, Monsieur, the Marquis de Dangeau, and Langlée, Maréchal des Logis. But as the advances were considerable, the players associated with them many other persons of the court." In 1687 the grand game of *reversi* recommenced, the five players being those of the preceding year. "*Reversi* was the only game at which the king played," says the Palatine, "and which he liked."

To *reversi* succeeded *brelan.* "The grand game of *brelan* is finished," writes Dangeau, under date of March, 1696. "MM. de Vendôme have gained more than 100,000 livres." At times the losses were enormous. Dangeau speaks of a loss of 10,000 pistoles, which would be 500,000 francs to-day. *Lansquenet* became fashionable about the same time, and kept its popularity for many years. "Here in France," says the Palatine, in 1695, "as soon as people assemble, they play *lansquenet.* That game is now the rage. They play for frightful sums, and the players are like madmen; they shout, they strike the table with their fists, they swear in a fashion to make one's hair stand on end." They undoubtedly did so at St. Cloud and Meudon, where they had a free rein, but not at Versailles or Marly. The Palatine herself bears witness to that: "It was formerly the custom to swear horridly on all occasions; the king detested this practice and soon abolished

[1] 250,000 francs to-day.

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Marie de Rabutin-Chantal, Marquise de Sévigné

it." He could not stamp it out entirely any more than he could dueling, but he abolished both as far as he could. In the king's houses, people did not dare to shout, and swear, and pound tables; but at Meudon and St. Cloud more than one fracas occurred. Saint-Simon mentions one at Meudon in August, 1698: "The Prince de Conti and the Grand Prieur were playing *hombre,* and a dispute arose respecting the game. The Grand Prieur, inflated by pride on account of the favors the king had showered upon him, and rendered audacious by being placed almost on a level with the princes of the blood, used words which would have been too strong even toward an equal. The Prince de Conti answered by a repartee in which the other's honesty at play and courage in war, both, in truth, little to boast about, were attacked. Upon this the Grand Prieur flew into a passion, flung away the cards, and demanded satisfaction, sword in hand. The Prince de Conti, with a smile of contempt, reminded him that he was wanting in respect, and at the same time said he could have the satisfaction he asked for whenever he pleased. The arrival of Monseigneur in his dressing-gown put an end to the fray. He ordered the Marquis de Gesvres, who was one of the courtiers present, to report the whole affair to the king, and that every one should go to bed. On the morrow the king was informed of what had taken place, and immediately ordered the Grand Prieur to go to the Bastille. He was obliged to obey, and remained in confinement several days. The affair made a great stir at court."

High play eventually ruined the nobility. Even moderate persons like the queen got into debt. When she died in 1683, she owed 100,000 crowns, which she had lost at *bassette.* The king paid them in April, 1684. Money was more plentiful then. Even in 1700 the king told the Duc de Bourgogne to play freely, since money would not fail him. In 1702 the young prince lost large sums, which the king paid at once;

but the Duc de Bourgogne thereafter diminished his play. "The king, who had just paid (1700) the heavy gaming and tradesmen's debts of Mme. la Duchesse," says Saint-Simon, "paid also those of Monseigneur, which amounted to 50,000 francs." The debts of Mme. la Duchesse on that occasion amounted to 12,000 pistoles, about 600,000 francs to-day; but in paying them the king made her promise to make no more debts. At Marly, even more than at Versailles, high play was the rule. In the bad years of the War of the Spanish Succession, though neither king nor court knew where to turn to get money, gambling still went on as best it could. At the marriage of the Duc de Berry in July, 1710, Saint-Simon relates that "the king, who had given a very mediocre present of diamonds to the new Duchesse de Berry, gave nothing to the Duc de Berry. The latter had so little money that he could not play during the first days of the voyage to Marly. The Duchesse de Bourgogne told this to the king, who, feeling the state in which he himself was, said that he had only 500 pistoles (25,000 francs) to give the Duc de Berry. He gave them with an excuse on the distress of the time, because the Duchesse de Bourgogne thought with reason that a little was better than nothing, and that it was insufferable not to be able to play." High play ruined the nobility. Yet, in the chapel of Versailles, Bourdaloue thundered forth these words: "Gambling without measure is for you not a diversion, but an occupation, a profession, a traffic, a passion, a rage, a fury. It causes you to forget your duties, it deranges your households, it dissipates your revenues." They listened, and they went their way. Their environment was such that to be unable to play continued to be "insufferable."

BALLS

The dance was the form of diversion in which the ladies of the court excelled. The majority of the dances of the period

were stately, serious, and difficult. A majestic and complicated dance like the *branle* or the *courante* required much practice; and to perform, in a long court train, a very rapid dance like the *passepied* was far from easy. Dancing was languishing at court, and being superseded by *lansquenet* and *brelan,* when in 1696 the Duchesse de Bourgogne came to restore the dance to honor.

Shortly before that time a ridiculous episode occurred at the balls given at the marriage of the Duc de Chartres and Mlle. de Blois, in 1692. It is interesting in connection with a court so dignified and so well disciplined as that of Louis XIV. "A son of Montbron," says Saint-Simon, "no more made to dance at court than his father was to be chevalier of the Order of St. Esprit (to which, however, he was promoted in 1688), was among the company. He had been asked if he danced well; and he replied with a confidence which made every one hope that the contrary was the case. Every one was satisfied. From the very first bow, he became confused, and he lost step at once. He tried to divert attention from his mistake by affected attitudes and carrying his arms high; but this made him only more ridiculous, and excited bursts of laughter, which, in spite of the respect due to the person of the king (who likewise had great difficulty to hinder himself from laughing), degenerated at length into regular hooting. On the morrow, instead of flying the court or holding his tongue, Montbron excused himself by saying that the presence of the king had disconcerted him, and promised marvels for the ball which was to follow. He was one of my friends, and I felt for him. I should even have warned him against a second attempt, if the very indifferent success I had met with previously had not made me fear that my advice would be taken in ill part. As soon as he began to dance at the second ball, those who were near stood up, those who were far off climbed wherever they could to get a

sight, and shouts of laughter were mingled with clapping of hands. Every one, even the king himself, laughed heartily, and most of us quite loud, so that I do not think that any one was ever so treated before. Montbron disappeared immediately afterward, and did not show himself again for a long time. It was a pity he exposed himself to this defeat, for he was an honorable and brave man."

At the time of the carnival, the number of balls was doubled. The winter of 1700 was very gay at Versailles and at Marly. There were grand balls on the 21st and 22d of January, and masquerades on the 4th, 5th, and 18th of February. The *Mercure* gives an account of the masquerade of the 18th, which was gotten up at Marly by the Duc de Chartres: "It represented the Grand Turk and his menagerie. He was carried by slaves in a palanquin, and preceded by a great number of animals as natural as life. There were ostriches, cranes, apes, bears, parrots, and butterflies. In his suite marched the officers and slaves of the seraglio, and the sultanas, who, together with the animals, danced in an *entrée* pleasant and new. M. le Marquis d'Antin[1] was the Grand Turk, and the officers of the seraglio were Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne, M. le Duc de Chartres, M. le Comte de Brionne, M. le Grand Prieur, M. le Prince Camille, and some others. The sultanas were Mme. la Princesse de Conti, and Mmes. d'Epinoy, de Villequier, and de Châtillon. Their costumes were magnificent. All the animals were as natural as life. The apes, who were professional mountebanks, were wonderful."[2]

A description of the brilliant balls at the marriage of the Duc de Bourgogne, and of other masquerades at carnival-time, will be found in the chapter on Fêtes.

[1] Legitimate son of Madame de Montespan.

[2] Mercure, 1700.

THE COLLATIONS

The bosquets in the gardens of Versailles furnished beautiful settings for the collations during the promenades of the court. Nearly all the bosquets served in turn for collations, but those most frequently used for that purpose were the Salle de Bal and the Colonnade. Dangeau mentions several of these occasions. "On the 7th of May, 1685, on returning from a wolf-hunt, Monseigneur gave a splendid collation in the Salle de Bal to those who had been at the hunt. The repast was very gay. On leaving table, he went to promenade in the gardens, and then embarked on the canal. . . . On the 12th of June, 1691, after a long promenade in the Orangery, the king, Monseigneur, the King and Queen of England, Monsieur and Madame, the princesses, and some ladies of their suite, went to the Salle de Bal, where they had a magnificent collation. They went afterward to visit many of the fountains. . . . On the 16th of May, 1691, after a promenade in gondolas on the canal, Monseigneur and the princesses went to sup at the Colonnade, which was extremely well lighted."

THE PROMENADES

The court promenades at Versailles were splendid spectacles, made expressly to be painted. To gain some notion of them, one should stand in the parterre of Latona, and look toward the palace. If the sun is sinking, and the fountains play, the leaping waters flash as they fall aloft on Latona and her children, and afar, beyond the green yews, in the long yellow façade of the château, the lofty windows of the gallery become refulgent. Then, as in the flesh, one may see again the court of France, in a blaze of pomp and color, descending that huge marble staircase at the heels of the Grand Monarch.

XIII

THE FÊTES

NOWHERE is there a better picture of the luxury of the court of Versailles than that given by the *Mercure* in describing the fêtes at the marriage of the Duc de Bourgogne and the Princess Marie Adelaide of Savoy (1697):

"No prince has ever kept his word with more exactness than the king. By the treaty made with M. le Duc de Savoie, His Majesty had promised to marry M. le Duc de Bourgogne to Mme. la Princesse de Savoie as soon as she should reach the age of twelve; and as she accomplished that on the 6th of December, the marriage took place on the day following. On that day, which was Saturday, all the princes, princesses, and principal ladies of the court assembled between eleven and twelve o'clock in the chamber [1] of Mme. la Princesse de Savoie. Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne, accompanied by M. le Duc de Beauvilliers,[2] was conducted there, about half-past eleven, by M. le Marquis de Blainville, grand master of ceremonies, and by M. des Granges, master of ceremonies; and that prince took a seat near the princess, who was still at her *toilette*. The king having informed her of the breaking up of the council, she left her chamber to join His Majesty, who was waiting for her in the gallery. Mgr. le Duc de Bour-

[1] The state bedchamber of the queen.
[2] The governor of the Duc de Bourgogne.

gogne gave her his right hand. M. le Marquis de Dangeau, his chevalier of honor, carried his robe behind that prince, and M. le Comte de Tessé, his first equerry, walking on the other side, assisted from time to time in bearing it, on account of the weight of these robes. An exempt of the Guards, for the time being in the service of Mme. la Princesse de Savoie, carried her train. They formed the procession to go to chapel. Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne and Mme. la Princesse de Savoie marched before His Majesty; the princes and the princesses marched according to their rank.

"The dresses were magnificent. The king wore a coat of cloth of gold, with heavy gold embroidery on the seams. Monseigneur was clad in gold brocade, with gold embroidery. The suit of Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne was of black velvet, with a mantle. The mantle was embroidered in gold and lined with cloth of silver, likewise embroidered in gold. He was in doublet and hose, and covered with lace (such as was formerly worn), with ribbons in his shoes and plumes in his hat. The dress of Mme. la Princesse de Savoie was of cloth of silver, embroidered in silver, with a set of rubies and pearls. Mgr. le Duc d'Anjou and Mgr. le Duc de Berry had coats of velvet, covered with gold embroidery, and very rich waistcoats. The suit of Monsieur was superb. It was of black velvet, with buttonholes of heavy gold embroidery and buttons of large diamonds. His waistcoat was of cloth of gold, and the rest of his costume was of the same richness. M. le Duc de Chartres had a coat of gray velvet embroidered in gold, and enriched with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds. M. le Prince[1] and M. le Duc[2] had costumes of great beauty. That of M. le Prince was of black velvet, embroidered in gold with a very fine embroidery and marked on the seams with one heavier and more rich. M. le Duc du Maine and M. le

[1] Henri-Jules de Bourbon, Prince de Condé.
[2] Louis III, Duc de Bourbon, son of the former.

Comte de Toulouse had also magnificent suits. Madame,[1] Mme. la Duchesse de Chartres,[2] and Mme. la Duchesse [3] had dresses in much the same style, that is to say, the most beautiful cloths of gold, embroidered in gold as heavily and richly as possible. Their head-dresses and their persons were covered with jewels. The dress of Mademoiselle [4] was generally admired. It was of green velvet, covered with gold embroidery in exquisite taste, with a set of diamonds and rubies. Mme. la Princesse de Conti had also a dress of green velvet, with magnificent gold embroidery, and many jewels. The dress of Mlle. de Condé [5] was of carnation-colored velvet, embroidered in gold and silver, with a quantity of jewels. A large number of the lords and ladies had dresses not at all inferior to those mentioned. The ladies who were no longer young were clad in black velvet, with very beautiful petticoats embroidered in gold, and were adorned with diamonds.

"The court in this magnificence passed through the grand gallery and the state apartments, descended the grand staircase,[6] and entered the chapel.[7] The crowd of spectators was very great throughout all the apartments, but they kept very good order in the chapel. Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne and Mme. la Princesse de Savoie knelt on cushions at the steps of the altar. M. le Cardinal de Coislin performed the ceremony of the betrothing, which was followed by that of the marriage, and in both these ceremonies Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne turned toward the king and Monseigneur to ask their consent; and Mme. la Princesse de Savoie did the same, and turned as well toward Monsieur and Madame to ask also their

[1] The Duchesse d'Orléans, the Palatine.

[2] Daughter of the king and Madame de Montespan.

[3] The Duchesse de Bourbon, daughter of the king and Montespan.

[4] Elizabeth-Charlotte d'Orléans, daughter of Monsieur.

[5] Anne-Louise de Bourbon, died in 1700.

[6] The ambassadors' staircase.

[7] The third chapel on the site of the salon of Hercules.

The Basin of Flora, Versailles

consent. Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne placed a ring on the finger of the Princesse de Savoie, and presented her with thirteen pieces of gold. Then M. le Cardinal began the mass. At the offertory, Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne and Mme. la Princesse de Savoie went to the offering, after having made the usual reverences to the altar, to the king, and to Monseigneur. M. le Marquis de Blainville presented to Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne a wax taper and ten louis d'or, and M. des Granges did the same to Mme. la Princesse de Savoie, with an equal number of louis. The canopy was held by M. l'Abbé de Coislin, called from the bishopric of Metz, first almoner in reversion, and by M. l'Abbé Morel, almoner of the king. After the mass, the king signed the register of the parish: then Mgr. le Dauphin, Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne and Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, Mgr. le Duc d'Anjou, Mgr. le Duc de Berry, Monsieur and Madame, M. le Duc and Mme. la Duchesse de Chartres, M. le Prince and Mme. la Princesse, and the other princes and princesses.[1]

"They left the chapel in the same order as that in which they had entered, and returned by the grand staircase, the apartments, and the gallery, to the chamber of Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, from which they passed into her antechamber.[2] His Majesty dined there at a table of horseshoe shape, at which were placed according to their rank Mgr. le Dauphin, Mgr. le Duc and Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, Mgr. le Duc d'Anjou, Mgr. le Duc de Berry, Monsieur, Madame, M. le Duc de Chartres, Mme. la Duchesse de Chartres, Mademoiselle, Mme. la Grande Duchesse,[3] and M.

[1] "The registers of the parish of Notre Dame are preserved to-day in the town-hall at Versailles. The baptisms, marriages, and deaths of the royal family of France are inscribed in these registers simply with those of the other inhabitants of the town." Dussieux, I, 171.

[2] The queen's antechamber.

[3] Marguerite - Louise d'Orléans, daughter of Gaston, Duc d'Orléans, uncle of Louis XIV; married to the Grand Duke of Tuscany.

le Prince, Mme. la Princesse, M. le Duc and Mme. la Duchesse, Mme. la Princesse de Conti, Mlle. de Condé, M. le Duc du Maine, M. le Comte de Toulouse, and Mme. la Duchesse de Verneuil.[1]

"Upon leaving table, they returned to the chamber of Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, where the king remained but a moment, and then went to his apartments, always more occupied with affairs of state than with pleasures, even in the grandest fêtes. Toward six in the evening, the ambassador of Savoy, with a numerous suite, came to compliment the princess upon her marriage, and to present to her some young noblemen from Italy. At quarter past seven, Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, followed by a large number of ladies, went to the king's apartments, where His Majesty was waiting for her in the salon,[2] to receive the King and Queen of England, who arrived a moment after. They entered into the gallery, which was lighted by three lines of lusters and a large number of candelabra. From the gallery they passed into the chamber or *portique*,[3] where they played for about an hour; at the end of which, the king, the King and Queen of England, and all the court, went to the salon,[4] at the end of the gallery, looking toward the Orangery, to see the fireworks which had been prepared at the end of the Swiss Lake. They

[1] Charlotte Séguier, widow of Henri de Bourbon, Duc de Verneuil, natural son of Henri IV. "The princes and princesses of the blood were placed at the left and right, according to their rank, terminated by the two illegitimate children of the king, and for the first time, after them, the Duchesse de Verneuil; so that M. de Verneuil, illegitimate son of Henri IV, became thus 'prince of the blood' so many years after his death, without having suspected it. The Duc d'Uzès thought this so amusing that he marched in front of the duchess, crying out, as loud as he could, 'Place, place, for Madame Charlotte Séguier!'" Saint-Simon, I, p. 18.

[2] To-day the bedchamber of Louis XIV.

[3] *Portique* was a game introduced at court about 1689. The players spun a ball about a portico, into which it rolled through one of the openings, and stopped on a number, the value of which decided the gain or loss.

[4] The salon of Peace.

did not have a theater arranged in the usual manner for the fireworks, but had placed them all round the water, and especially at the further end, upon a kind of natural amphitheater; and everything was arranged so as to form arches of fire over the water, at the sides of which an immense number of lamps in earthen pots made a parterre of light. But the wind and the rain, which came about that time, injured the spectacle.

"All the court passed then to the chamber of Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, which was brilliantly lighted, and in which, the day before, they had set up a magnificent bed and canopy of green velvet, embroidered in gold and silver. The court saw there, also, the *toilette* of the princess, which was much admired, both for its articles of gold and silver and for its embroidery and lace.

"They went to table, and the king supped, with the King and Queen of England, and with the same persons, and in the same apartment, as at dinner. During the supper, they placed in the grand cabinet of Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne the *toilette* of Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne, which in richness and good taste, lace and embroidery, made it difficult to decide as to which of the two *toilettes* the preference should be given.

"After the supper, the grand master and the master of ceremonies went to seek M. le Cardinal de Coislin, who was to pronounce the benediction of the bed. Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne undressed in the cabinet where they had placed his *toilette,* and at the same time Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne was undressed, after they had made all the persons leave her bedchamber who ought not to remain. The King of England presented the shirt to Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne, and the Queen of England the chemise to Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, who gave her garters and her bouquet to Mademoiselle.[1] As soon as Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne was

[1] Mlle. d'Orléans, daughter of Monsieur.

in bed, the king summoned Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne, who entered the chamber in his dressing-gown, his cap in his hand, and his hair tied behind with a red ribbon, and placed himself in bed on the right side. The curtains at the foot of the bed were closed, but those at the sides remained half open. The king summoned the ambassador of Savoy, and said to him that he could now testify that he had seen the married couple in bed together. The king and the King and Queen of England retired, but Monseigneur remained in the chamber. A moment after, Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne rose, passed into the grand cabinet, where he dressed again, and returned to his own apartments to go to bed.[1]

" On Sunday, the 8th, at six in the evening, there was an assembly in the grand cabinet of Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, where were a very large number of princesses and duchesses, magnificently attired. The king came at seven o'clock. They passed then to the state apartments, where they had music, play,[2] and a splendid collation. Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne wore on that day a dress of red velvet, embroidered in gold, with a set of diamonds.

" Monday, the 9th, the fête of the Conception of the Virgin, the king and all the court heard the sermon of Père Bourdaloue, and vespers. Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne appeared for the first time at chapel in her new rank. She wore that day a dress of black velvet, with a set of diamonds, and a petticoat of cloth of gold, embroidered in gold.

" Tuesday, the 10th, the Prince of Wales and the Princess of England[3] came at three o'clock to visit Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, who wore that day a dress of rose-colored satin, embroidered in silver, with a set of diamonds. They went afterward to the apartments of Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne.

[1] On account of their youth, they were not permitted to live together until two years later.

[2] Gambling at *portique*.

[3] The children of James II.

"On Wednesday, the 11th, there was in the gallery of Versailles the largest and most magnificent ball that had ever been seen at court. In the center of the gallery, a place, fifty feet long and nineteen feet wide, had been arranged for the dancing, and was surrounded by two rows of seats for the lords and ladies. The arm-chair of the king, and those of the King and Queen of England, faced the salon of Peace; and, opposite these arm-chairs, the inclosure of the ball had an opening six feet wide to permit entrance and exit. In all the windows of the gallery there were tiers of seats, covered with tapestry. The gallery was lighted by three lines of chandeliers, extending from one end to the other: those of the middle line had eight branches, and were the largest; the others were of seventeen branches each, but smaller. There were also on each side thirty-two candelabra on round, gilded tables; but what lighted to the best advantage were eight rounded pyramids, ten feet high, composed of eight steps rising to a point, and covered with gold gauze, each of which held one hundred and fifty candles in silver candlesticks. These pyramids rested on square pedestals, four feet high and four feet wide, covered with crimson velvet fringed with gold. Four of these pyramids were placed at the corners of the inclosure of the ball, and the other four at the ends of the gallery, at the sides of the doorways leading to the salons, which, in their turn, were lighted by five lusters each, and by four candelabra on gilded tables. In the three doors of the salon of the private apartments of the king, which open into the center of the gallery, there were tiers of seats for the violins and hautboys, but these seats did not jut out into the gallery.

"Before four o'clock all the seats in the windows were filled with the crowd, and between six and seven the noblemen and ladies of the court assembled in the apartments of Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne. It would be impossible to de-

scribe the richness and diversity of the dresses. Monseigneur wore a coat of cloth of gold, embroidered in silver. Mgrs. les Ducs de Bourgogne, d'Anjou, and de Berry were in coats of velvet, heavily embroidered in gold. That of Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne was black, with many diamonds. Monsieur wore the same costume as on the day of the marriage, black velvet with buttonholes embroidered in gold and large diamond buttons. That of M. le Duc de Chartres was rich and elegant; it was of gold brocade. The lords, who were in great number, had coats of velvet richly embroidered, or brocades. Some had simple coats, but the large majority had coats covered with gold and silver embroidery. They had very rich shoulder-knots, their sleeves were covered with gold and silver lace, and their gloves were trimmed with the same; their silk stockings were embroidered in gold, and their shoes were adorned with ribbons. The dresses of the ladies were not less splendid. That of Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne was of cloth of gold, with a trimming of diamonds, in which, as in her head-dress, were the most beautiful diamonds of the crown. Madame, Mme. la Duchesse de Chartres, Mademoiselle, Mme. la Duchesse, Mme. la Princesse de Conti, and Mlle. de Condé, all had dresses rivaling one another in beauty and richness. All the ladies at the ball were in cloths of gold or silver, or in velvets of all colors, and covered with jewels.

"The king came at seven o'clock into the chamber of Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne. He was clad in black velvet, embroidered everywhere with very fine and delicate gold embroidery, and on the seams with one heavier and richer, and with diamond buttons. The King and Queen of England arrived shortly after. The queen was richly clad in cloth of gold. They passed into the gallery, and the ball commenced. Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne opened it by the *branle*,[1] taking

[1] A solemn stately dance, in which the dancers repeated what was done by the two who opened the *branle*.

Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, and when the *branle* was finished, they danced together the first *courante*.[1] Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne took Mgr. le Duc d'Anjou, and he took Mme. la Duchesse de Chartres, who took Mgr. le Duc de Berry, who in his turn took Mademoiselle, and the others followed in order and according to rank.

"As the number of dancers was very large, many of those who were named could not dance at all, owing to the fact that there were not enough ladies. Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne was much admired in the minuet and in the *passepied*.[2] They danced frequently with four persons in the minuet, and at the end with a larger number.

"At eight o'clock the king asked for the collation, which was brought in on twelve tables, covered with moss and verdure, on which in compartments were all kinds of fruits and sweetmeats, surrounded by flowers. They were brought into the inclosure of the ball, and when all together they formed a fragrant parterre, in which were four orange-trees. The tables were then separated, and, being on wheels, were pushed, one after another, around the inclosure of the ball. Valets brought also an immense number of baskets full of packages of sweetmeats, and trays full of liqueurs and ices. After the collation had been entirely 'pillaged,' the valets removed all traces of it, and the ball was continued until half-past ten. When it was finished, the king and Their Britannic Majesties entered the private apartments of His Majesty, where supper was served in the antechamber. The lords and ladies left the gallery by way of the apartments of Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne. The king's table was of horseshoe shape, as on the day of the marriage. It was filled by His Majesty, the King and Queen of England, Monseigneur, Mgr. le Duc and Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, Mgrs. les Ducs d'Anjou

[1] This was more of a stately march, full of graceful poses, than a dance.
[2] A very rapid dance.

and de Berry, Monsieur and Madame, M. and Madame de Chartres, Mademoiselle, Mme. la Duchesse, and Mme. la Princesse de Conti. After supper, the King and Queen of England returned to St. Germain, and every one retired.

"On the following Saturday, the 14th of December, there was another large ball, which began later than the preceding one, because they did not have supper until midnight. The crowd of spectators had been so great at the first ball that people of rank had had hardly sufficient room to dance. Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne wore on this evening a dress of black velvet all covered with diamonds. Her hair was wound with pearls, and her head-dress and corsage were so full of diamonds[1] that she was so dazzling that one could hardly look at her. The greater part of the princesses of the royal family wore on that evening dresses of black velvet. Madame was decked with rubies and diamonds, and her petticoat was of gold brocade. Mme. la Duchesse de Chartres was in black velvet, trimmed on all the seams with diamonds. The dress of Mademoiselle was of black velvet, laced with diamonds and pearls. All the head-dresses were covered with jewels. The princes were not less magnificent. . . . Nothing more brilliant had been seen. In the gallery and the adjoining apartments there were four or five thousand lights."[2]

LA FÊTE DES ROIS

La Fête des Rois (Twelfth-Night) was celebrated each year with pomp. In 1688 there were 70 ladies at the king's supper, and 90 at the fête of 1693. In 1698 the king did not wish to celebrate *les Rois* at Versailles on account of the large number of ladies whom he would have been obliged to invite. A list had been made of 407, of whom the king would have

[1] The king had given to the Duchesse de Bourgogne, shortly before her marriage, all the crown jewels, valued at 11,333,000 livres (about $12,000,000 to-day).

[2] Le Mercure Galant, 1697.

The Basin of Neptune

been obliged to ask at least 200. The fête, therefore, was held at Marly. The fête of 1708 had special brilliancy.

"A little before ten o'clock," says Dangeau, "the king went to the apartments of Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, where were the King of England [1] and the princess his sister, the princesses and ladies of the court. They entered the gallery, which was most brilliantly illuminated with more than 2000 large candles, and from the gallery they passed into the grand antechamber [2] of the king. They found there four tables of eighteen covers each. The king held the first, where were the King of England, the princess his sister, and Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne. Monseigneur presided over the second, Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne over the third, and Mgr. le Duc de Berry over the fourth. After supper, they returned to the gallery, and passed to the state apartments of the king, where there was a magnificent ball in the salon of Mars, in the tribunes of which were the violins and hautboys. The courtiers entered from the salon of Diana; the king and the great officers of the crown, from the salon of Mercury. There were many there who had never before had the honor of dancing before the king. The king remained at the ball until half-past one in the morning; Monseigneur remained until the end." [3]

The *Mercure* completes the account of Dangeau by furnishing further details of the same fête: "Seventy-two Swiss of the Cent-Suisses of His Majesty were chosen to serve the four tables in the king's antechamber, and to avoid confusion, that each one might know to what table he was to carry the plates given to him, the four companies of Swiss had ribbons of different colors, corresponding to the colors of the tables, so that no confusion occurred. They had summoned many controllers of the *Maison du Roi* for the meats, and

[1] In 1708, the son of James II; so called at Versailles.

[2] The *Œil-de-Bœuf*.

[3] Dangeau, VI, p. 274.

there were two at each table to carve. . . . While the 'queens' drank, they followed the ancient custom, and cries of 'The queen drinks!' were heard on all sides. As it sometimes happened that two or three 'queens' were drinking at the same moment, the noise was increased, but always very agreeable, with the sounds of clapping of hands, or the striking of a dish or glass with a fork, in accordance with the ceremony. . . . At the ball, in the salon of Mars, the inclosure for the dancing was in the form of a square, with arm-chairs at one side for the king and for the King of England, and stools and benches for the courtiers. At either end of the salon, and in the windows, were raised seats for the spectators. The officers of the music and the musicians were in the marble tribunes; and the salon was lighted by twelve lusters and many candelabra. . . . The princess of England was in what is now called *grand habit;* it was of yellow velvet, and covered with jewels, both petticoat and train. The dress of Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne was of black velvet, and her petticoat was covered with many jewels. The two princesses had very beautiful head-dresses. All the ladies were in different-colored velvets, with diamonds. The ball was opened by the King of England and the princess his sister. People noticed that the first time that His Britannic Majesty rose to dance, the king rose also, and remained standing as long as that prince danced. All the princes, princesses, and the other persons who danced, saluted Their Majesties before beginning to dance. . . . The king left the ball at one o'clock. The collation, which was brought in some time after, was first presented to all the circle, and then to the spectators. The ball began again after the collation, and continued until four o'clock in the morning. At the close of the ball, His Britannic Majesty and the princess his sister returned to St. Germain. The Body-Guards, the Cent-

Suisses, and the French Guards were under arms, and their drums beat the salute, as is customary whenever Their Britannic Majesties come to the king's palace."

THE CARNIVAL

At the time of the carnival many fancy-dress balls and masquerades were held nearly every year. The *Mercure* describes the carnival of 1683: "There have been this winter five balls in five different apartments at Versailles, all so grand and so beautiful that no other royal house in the world can show the like. Entrance was given to masks only, and no persons presented themselves without being disguised, unless they were of very high rank. . . . People invent grotesque disguises, they revive old fashions, they choose the most ridiculous things, and seek to make them as amusing as possible. . . . Mgr. le Dauphin changed his disguise eight or ten times each evening. M. Bérain had need of all his wit to furnish these disguises, and of all his ingenuity to get them made up, since there was so little time from one ball to another. The prince did not wish to be recognized, and all sorts of extraordinary disguises were invented for him; frequently under the figures that concealed him, one could not have told whether the person thus masked was tall or short, fat or thin. Sometimes he had double masks, and under the first a mask of wax so well made that, when he took off his first mask, people fancied they saw the natural face, and he deceived everybody. Nothing can equal the enjoyment which Mgr. le Dauphin takes in all these diversions, nor the rapidity with which he changes his disguises. He leaves all his officers without being fatigued, although he works harder at dressing and undressing himself than they do, and he dances much. This prince shows in the least things, in his horsemanship, and in the ardor with which he follows the chase,

what pleasure he will take some day in commanding armies. But could one expect less from the son of Louis le Grand![1]

"The first of the five balls was given by M. le Grand,[2] in his apartments in the new wing of Versailles.[3] The ball commenced with a masquerade. They danced a minuet and a jig; but only Mlle. de Nantes[4] danced in the latter. The minuet was danced by Mlles. d'Armagnac, d'Uzès, and de Grignan. Mlle. de Nantes was especially admired when she danced, and made so great an impression that people stood on chairs to see her better. Mgr. le Dauphin came to the masquerade with M. le Prince de la Roche-sur-Yon and many other nobles. He was in a sedan-chair, accompanied by a number of merry-andrews and dwarfs. He changed his disguise four or five times during the ball, which lasted until four o'clock in the morning. . . . The second ball was given by Mgr. le Dauphin in the hall of his Guards, which forms the entrance to his apartments. M. le Duc gave the third, which was magnificent. Some days after it was the turn of the Cardinal de Bouillon to receive the court."

One carnival was much like another, in spite of the diversity of the disguises. On the 24th of February, 1699, there were 3000 masks at St. Cloud at a ball given by Monsieur. The winter of 1700 was very gay.

"From just before Candlemas day to Easter of this year (1700)," says Saint-Simon, "nothing was heard of but balls and pleasures of the court. The king gave at Versailles and Marly several masquerades, by which he was much amused, under pretext of amusing the Duchesse de Bourgogne. At one of these balls at Marly a ridiculous scene occurred. Dancers were wanting, and Madame de Luxembourg on ac-

[1] This little panegyric, in very good taste when it was written, is now quite ridiculous. Monseigneur never fulfilled such hopes.

[2] The grand equerry.

[3] The south wing of the château.

[4] Daughter of Louis XIV and Madame de Montespan; later, Duchesse de Bourbon.

count of this obtained an invitation, but with great difficulty, for she lived in such a fashion that no woman would see her. M. de Luxembourg was perhaps the only person in France who was ignorant of Madame de Luxembourg's conduct. He lived with his wife on apparently good terms, and as though he had not the slightest mistrust of her. On this occasion, because of the want of dancers, the king made older people dance than was customary, and among others M. de Luxembourg. Everybody was compelled to be masked. M. de Luxembourg spoke on this subject to M. le Prince, who, malicious as any monkey, determined to divert all the court and himself at the duke's expense. He invited M. de Luxembourg to supper, and after that meal was over, masked him according to his fancy.

" Soon after my arrival at the ball, I saw a figure strangely clad in long flowing muslin, and with a head-dress on which were fixed the horns of a stag, so high that they became entangled in the chandelier. Of course everybody was much astonished at so strange a sight, and all thought that that mask must be very sure of his wife to deck himself so. Suddenly the mask turned round and showed us M. de Luxembourg. The burst of laughter at this was scandalous. Good M. de Luxembourg, who was never very remarkable for wit, benignly took all this laughter as having been excited simply by the singularity of his costume, and to the questions addressed to him replied quite simply that his dress had been arranged by M. le Prince; then, turning to the right and to the left, he admired himself and strutted with pleasure at having been masked by M. le Prince. In a moment more the ladies arrived, and the king immediately after them. The laughter commenced anew as loudly as ever, and M. de Luxembourg presented himself to the company with a confidence that was ravishing. His wife had heard nothing of this masquerading, and when she saw it, lost countenance, brazen as she was.

Everybody stared at her and her husband, and seemed dying of laughter. M. le Prince looked at the scene from behind the king, and laughed inwardly at his malicious trick. This amusement lasted throughout all the ball, and the king, self-contained as he usually was, laughed also. People were never tired of admiring an invention so cruelly ridiculous, and spoke of it for several days.

"No evening passed on which there was not a ball. The chancellor's wife gave one which was a fête the most gallant and the most magnificent possible. There were different rooms for the fancy-dress ball, for the masqueraders, for a superb collation, for shops of all countries, Chinese, Japanese, etc., where many singular and beautiful things were sold, but no money taken; they were presents for the Duchesse de Bourgogne and the ladies. Everybody was especially diverted at this entertainment, which did not finish until eight o'clock in the morning. Madame de Saint-Simon and I passed the last three weeks of this time without ever seeing the day. Certain dancers were allowed to leave off dancing only at the same time as the Duchesse de Bourgogne. One morning at Marly, when I wished to escape too early, the duchess caused me to be forbidden to pass the doors of the salon; several of us had the same fate. I was delighted when Ash Wednesday arrived, and I remained a day or two dead-beat. Madame de Saint-Simon could not get over Shrove Tuesday."

The fête to which Saint-Simon alludes was given by Madame de Pontchartrain, the wife of the Chancellor of France, in the Hôtel de la Chancellerie, Rue de la Chancellerie, Versailles, on the 8th of February, 1700. It was the most elaborate fête held outside of the palace. The *Mercure* describes the fête in detail:

"Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, learning that Mme. la Chancelière wished to give her a ball, received the proposition

with much joy. Although there were but eight days in which to prepare for it, Mme. la Chancelière resolved to give the princess in one evening all the diversions that people usually take during all the carnival period — namely, comedy, fair, and ball. When the evening came, detachments of Swiss were posted in the street and in the courtyard, with many servants of Mme. la Chancelière, so that there was no confusion at the gates or in the court, which was brightly lighted with torches. . . . People saw in the ball-room a large portrait of Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, above the fireplace. The ball-room was lighted by ten chandeliers and by magnificent, gilded candelabra. At one end, on raised seats, were the musicians, hautboys and violins, in fancy dress with plumed caps. In front of the velvet-covered benches for the courtiers were three arm-chairs, one for Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, and the others for Monsieur and Madame. On account of a slight indisposition, Monsieur was not present, but Madame came, without being masked. Beyond the ball-room, across the landing of the staircase, was another hall, brilliantly lighted, in which were hautboys and violins, and this hall was for the masks, who came in such numbers that the ball-room could not have contained them all.

"On alighting from her carriage, Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne was received by M. le Chancelier, Mme. la Chancelière, and their son, M. le Comte de Pontchartrain, and by many of their friends and relatives. . . . Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne was conducted to the ball-room. Monseigneur, Mgrs. les Ducs de Bourgogne and de Berry, and all the princesses, all masked, arrived almost at the same time, and having received them, M. le Chancelier left the other honors to Mme. la Chancelière. . . . After remaining about an hour at the ball, Mme. la Chancelière and the Comte de Pontchartrain conducted Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne into another hall, filled with lights and mirrors, where a theater had been

erected to furnish the diversion of a comedy. Only about one hundred people were allowed to enter the hall of comedy, and the princes and princesses of the blood, being masked, took no rank there. Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne and Madame had arm-chairs in the center of the hall. The Duchesse de Bourgogne was surprised to see a splendid theater, adorned with her arms and monogram. . . . As soon as the princess was seated, Bari, the famous mountebank of Paris, came forward and asked her protection against the doctors, and having extolled the excellence of his remedies, and the marvels of his secrets, he offered to the princess as a little diversion a comedy such as they sometimes played at Paris. There was given then a little comedy which Mme. la Chancelière had gotten M. Dancourt to write expressly for that fête. All the actors were from the company of the comedians of the king. They played to perfection, and received much praise. . . . At the end of the comedy, Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne was conducted into another hall, where a superb collation had been prepared in an ingenious manner. At one end of the hall, in a half-circle, were five booths, in which were merchants, clad in the costumes of different countries; a French pastry-cook, a seller of oranges and lemons, an Italian lemonade-seller, a seller of sweetmeats, a vendor of coffee, tea, and chocolate. They were from the king's musicians, and sung their wares, accompanied by music, at the sides of the booths, and had pages to serve the guests. The booths were splendidly painted and gilded, adorned with lusters and flowers, and bore the arms and cipher of Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne. At the back of each booth a large mirror reflected the whole. . . . The Duchesse de Bourgogne left this hall, after the collation, delighted with all that she had seen and heard. Since the ball-room was so crowded with masks, the princess returned to the hall of comedy, where they held a smaller court ball until two

La Saône, bronze group on the Terrace, Versailles

o'clock, when she went to the grand ball to see the masks. She was much amused there until four in the morning. When Mme. la Chancelière and the Comte de Pontchartrain conducted her to the foot of the staircase, she thanked them much for the pleasure they had given her. This fête brought many congratulations to Mme. la Chancelière." [1]

TOURNAMENTS AT THE GREAT STABLES

On several occasions tournaments were held in the riding-school of the Great Stables at Versailles. Dangeau, under date of June 4th and 5th, describes the tournament of 1685:

"The king and Mme. la Dauphine [2] dined at an early hour, and on leaving table, the king and Monseigneur entered a carriage. Mme. la Dauphine and many ladies followed in other carriages. In the court of the ministers, they found all the cavaliers of the tournament drawn up in two lines; the pages and lackeys were there also. Monseigneur mounted a horse at the head of one company; M. le Duc de Bourbon was at the head of the other. The king went to take his seat in the place prepared for him.

"The cavaliers first rode round the courtyard of the château, passing under the windows of the young Duc de Bourgogne, who was on the balcony. Then they rode out of the gate and down the Avenue de Paris, and entered the riding-school of the Great Stables by a gate made near the Kennels. After riding in procession before the raised seats of the court, they took their posts, twenty cavaliers in each corner, with their pages and grooms behind them; the drums and trumpets at the barrier. The subject of the tournament was the wars of Granada, and the cavaliers represented the Spaniards and the Moors. Monseigneur rode a tilt with the Duc de Bourbon, and MM. de Vendôme and de Brionne rode at the same time to make the figure. . . . There were three

[1] Le Mercure, 1700.

[2] The wife of Monseigneur.

courses run for the prize, which was won by the Prince de Lorraine. It was a sword ornamented with diamonds, and he received it from the hand of the king. After the tournament all the cavaliers conducted the king to the courtyard of the château, lance in hand, and the heads of the companies saluted him with their swords.

"On the 5th, a second tournament was held, and in spite of the bad weather, the king found it more beautiful than the first. Many ladies were present. The Russian envoys, who had not seen the previous fête, occupied seats at the king's right. During a shower, the spectators retired quickly, but as soon as it had passed, all the seats were filled again. The Marquis de Plumartin won the prize. It was a sword adorned with diamonds, but more costly than that won by the Prince de Lorraine." [1]

[1] Dangeau, I.

XIV

THE CEREMONIES

IN 1685 the King of France was at the summit of his fortunes. Victorious in two wars, he had annexed Franche-Comté, Strasburg, and Luxemburg. His navy numbered 250 ships, and his army 400,000 men. His prestige in Europe was very great. Having broken faith in the last war, Genoa had suffered a furious bombardment by the fleet of Duquesne. But the Grand Monarch was not content. He demanded that the Doge of Genoa should come to Versailles to beg pardon.

RECEPTION OF THE DOGE OF GENOA

On the 15th of May, 1685, the Doge Lescari and four senators had a public audience with the king, and presented the apologies of the Republic of Genoa. The *Mercure* furnishes the best account of that ceremony:

"Having ascended the magnificent staircase leading to the state apartments of His Majesty, the doge and the senators passed through them to the salon of War, from which they entered the grand gallery, beyond which was the king, in the salon of Peace. All the apartments and the gallery were superbly furnished, and contained silver furniture worth many millions. The crowd was equally great throughout, although these apartments and the gallery can hold as many people as the largest palace. In spite of the efforts taken to keep a passage free, the doge had much difficulty in crossing

the gallery. M. le Maréchal Duc de Duras, captain of the Body-Guards on duty, accompanied him to the foot of the throne. It was of silver, and raised only two steps from the floor. Monseigneur and Monsieur were at either side of the king, and His Majesty was surrounded by all the princes of the blood and the great officers of the crown. The suite of the doge, being numerous, did not approach the throne, but remained in the gallery. The doge, when he saw the king, and perceived that he could be recognized, uncovered. Then advancing some steps, he made two profound reverences to His Majesty, and at the same time the senators did likewise. The king rose, and replied to these reverences by slightly raising his hat; after which he made a sign for the doge to approach, calling him with his hand. The doge mounted the first step of the throne, where he made a third reverence, as did the four senators behind him. The king and the doge then covered themselves, and all the princes put on their hats likewise, but the senators remained uncovered." . . . (On account of its length, the speech of the doge will be omitted.) "Each time that His Majesty's name was mentioned in the speech, the doge and the king uncovered, and all the princes uncovered also; and this occurred a number of times. The king replied to the doge that 'he was satisfied with the submission made by the Republic of Genoa; that he was sorry he had had occasion to make his displeasure break out against her, but that he was happy to see affairs as they now were, because he believed it was the beginning of very friendly relations; that he saw in it the promise of good faith on the part of the Republic of Genoa; and since he had a high esteem for Genoa, he would give on every occasion marks of the return of his favor.' In regard to the doge, His Majesty spoke of his personal merit with much graciousness, letting him know the particular esteem in which he held him. After the response of the king, the four senators paid their compliments,

each in turn, and His Majesty replied to each very graciously, and especially to M. Salvago, who had lived for a number of years in France as envoy of Genoa.

"At the conclusion of the audience, the king saluted the doge, lowering his hat more than he had when His Serenity arrived. The doge and the senators made three profound reverences as they retired. When they reëntered the gallery, they covered themselves. They returned in the same order, finding everywhere such a crowd that they had some difficulty in reaching the apartment where tables were spread for them. All the court and all the people who filled Versailles soon learned that the king was pleased with the doge, and that the doge was charmed with the king's manner toward him. Nothing else was talked of throughout the day. The king, at his dinner, spoke very highly of the doge in the presence of the court, saying that he had found him well bred and intellectual, without any embarrassment; that he had displayed courage in his misfortune, and no servility; that the part he had had to perform was not an easy one, but that he had acquitted himself in a manner meriting applause."[1]

RECEPTION OF THE AMBASSADORS OF SIAM

On the 1st of September, 1686, Louis gave audience in the gallery of Versailles to an embassy from Siam. Dangeau's account of the ceremony is as follows: "The king gave audience to the ambassadors of Siam upon a throne raised at the end of the gallery, next to the salon of Peace. The order was beautiful; and His Majesty congratulated M. d'Aumont, first gentleman of the Chamber. The ambassadors spoke very well. The Abbé de Lyonne served them as interpreter. They remained at the foot of the throne, until the moment when they presented to the king the letter of their master; they mounted then to the top step. The Siamese showed

[1] The Mercure, 1685.

profound respect, and, after their fashion, went to the end of the gallery on their hands and knees, not wishing to turn their backs to the king. There were three ambassadors, four noblemen, and two secretaries; the rest of their suite were servants." [1]

The Marquis de Sourches gives the king's costume on this occasion: "His Majesty wore a coat of cloth of gold, laced with large diamonds." [2]

THE CEREMONY OF THE WASHING ON HOLY THURSDAY

Each year on Holy Thursday the king washed the feet of the poor in the Grand Hall of the Guards at Versailles. This was a part of the ceremony of the Lord's Supper *(Cène)*.

"The ceremony at present observed at court on Holy Thursday is as follows. On the Wednesday before, during *Tenebræ,* at which His Majesty assists, one of the almoners and the first doctor of the king, followed by surgeons and barbers, go to a place where a large number of poor children have been assembled. Out of the number they choose thirteen, the most agreeable, who are examined by the first doctor, surgeons, and barbers of the king to see if they are healthy, to make sure they have no sores on their bodies, and especially on their legs and feet. Being found in proper condition to be presented on the following day, Holy Thursday, before the king for the ceremony of the washing of feet, the names of the children are written down by the almoner, who gives the list to the treasurer of the king's alms and presents, and the treasurer gives the orders necessary for the ceremony which belongs to his office.

"On Holy Thursday, at six in the morning, the thirteen children are brought to the Quartermaster's Department, where the barber of the Grand Commun cuts their hair and their toe-nails. The officers of the Quartermaster's Depart-

[1] Dangeau. [2] Memoirs, II, p. 161.

ment wash their feet and legs with warm, perfumed water. They are dressed in robes of red cloth, with hoods behind; their feet are wrapped up, and they are conducted by their fathers and mothers, or by some of their relatives, into the hall where the ceremony is held, and are seated on a bench, with their backs to the table where the king will serve them, and their faces toward the pulpit, where the grand almoner, or other prelate chosen to make the service before His Majesty, gives the exhortation on the subject of the ceremony. After the exhortation, they sing the *Miserere,* at the end of which the grand almoner, or other prelate, gives absolution. The king then advances toward the children, kneels down, washes the right foot of the first, and does the same to the others. The grand almoner of France holds the basin of silver-gilt, and one of the almoners on duty holds the foot of the child that the king washes, and dries it after him.

" When the ceremony of the washing is over, the children are brought to the other side of the table, where they are served by the king, each one receiving thirteen wooden plates containing meats, fish, and vegetables, and a little jug of wine. All the meats are handed to His Majesty by the princes of the blood, or by the great officers who accompany him. The first *maître d'hôtel* walks before the king with his baton of ceremony. Behind the children there is an almoner on duty, who takes the plates as soon as the king places them on the table, and who puts them into the baskets held by the parents of the children, to whom the plates belong. About the neck of each child the king hangs a purse of red leather containing thirteen crowns. The treasurer of his alms presents the purses to His Majesty.

" The ceremony being finished, the king goes to mass with a grand train of princes, lords, and officers of the court, and at the end, with a wax taper in his hand, and followed by the same retinue, he accompanies the Holy Sacrament from the

altar to the oratory prepared for him, where he makes his devotions." [1]

THE CEREMONY OF TOUCHING FOR THE KING'S EVIL

At Easter, Whitsunday, All Saints', and Christmas, the king touched persons afflicted with scrofula. On the 16th of May, 1698, the eve of Whitsunday, he touched 3000. The ceremony was as follows. The sick, coming from all parts, some even from Spain, were arranged by officers of the king's Household, sometimes near the chapel, sometimes in other places, as in 1675 when the king touched the sick in the Orangery at Versailles. Kneeling in lines, with hands joined, they implored the aid of God. After mass His Majesty came, accompanied by his grand almoner. The doctors and surgeons were behind the sick, and held the head of each, that the king might touch it more easily. Standing before each sick person, His Majesty passed his hand across the forehead from ear to ear, saying, "The king touches thee, God cures thee"; and giving to each his benediction by the sign of the cross. To each one the grand almoner gave alms—5 sous to foreigners, 2 sous to the French. The first *maître d'hôtel* carried a basin of wine and water for the king to wash his hands at the end of the ceremony.

OTHER CEREMONIES

The ceremony of the Order of St. Esprit was held at New Year's, at Candlemas, and at Easter. The chevaliers of the order, in gala costume, marched in procession in the court; a chapter was held; and finally all were present at a grand mass in the chapel.

The procession each year at Corpus Christi was of great magnificence. The courtyards of the château were hung with

[1] Du Peyrat, Histoire Ecclésiastique de la Cour, p. 774.

La Dordogne, bronze group on the Terrace, Versailles

the finest tapestries of the crown, and were adorned with orange-trees, at first in tubs of silver, and later in tubs of gilded wood. The procession, leaving the court of the ministers, traversed the Place d'Armes on its way to the parish church of Versailles. The king, with uncovered head, followed on foot, accompanied by more than a thousand pages of the Chamber, of the Great and Little Stables, and by Cent-Suisses and Body-Guards, all bearing tapers of white wax. His Majesty was followed by all the almoners of his Household, by the priests of the Mission, and by all the court. After hearing mass at the parish church, the king returned to the château in a carriage.

RECEPTION OF THE AMBASSADOR OF PERSIA

On the 19th of February, 1715, the king received a Persian ambassador at Versailles. Both Dangeau and Saint-Simon have doubts about this ambassador. Dangeau says, "Neither he nor his suite merited much attention"; while Saint-Simon declares him to be "a sham Persian ambassador whom Pontchartrain had imposed on the king." The matter has never been cleared up. One version is that a high Persian official had sent a merchant to Paris to conclude some business negotiations, and that Pontchartrain made use of this merchant to cheer the aged and fast-failing king by the idea that the days of his apotheosis had come again, that Persia, filled with admiration for his glory, had sent him an embassy. If so, it was a cruel trick, and frightful irony, to make an old man who had once been the terror of Europe, and who had preserved his prestige through misfortune, put on his gold coat and mount his throne to receive a sham.

"The king," says Dangeau, "rose at his usual hour. He put on a coat of cloth of gold and black velvet, trimmed with diamonds worth 12,500,000 livres, and this coat was so

heavy that the king changed it immediately after dinner. Besides the jewels he had on him, the king had given a set of diamonds and pearls to the Duc du Maine, and a set of colored stones to the Comte de Toulouse. The Duc d'Orléans had a coat of blue velvet, embroidered with pearls and diamonds, which was much admired. The Persian ambassador did not arrive until eleven o'clock. A little before the ambassador came, the king appeared upon the balcony of his chamber, and the people who filled the courtyard shouted, '*Vive le Roi!*' I think I never heard them shout with more enthusiasm. The shouts came from all the courtyards, and even from the Avenue de Paris, which was filled with the crowd as far as the house of Bontemps, where the ambassador alighted from his carriage and mounted a horse. Neither he nor his suite merited much attention. They entered the courtyard of the château, and alighted at the apartment of the Duc de Guiche. While they were entering, the king passed into the gallery, where on one side there were raised seats, filled with more than four hundred ladies, magnificently attired. The ladies of the court were nearest to the throne; the ladies from Paris, more toward the end of the gallery. The king, in entering, had the politeness to pass close to the seats that the ladies might see his magnificence to advantage. He mounted his throne, where at his right side was Mgr. le Dauphin,[1] in a dress and cap covered with jewels; Mme. la Duchesse de Ventadour held him by the leading-strings. At the king's left was Mgr. le Duc d'Orléans, and to the right and left all the princes of the blood, according to their rank. Mme. la Duchesse de Berry, Madame, and all the princesses of the blood, with their ladies, were there also. Upon the steps of the throne, behind the princes of the blood, were the four first

[1] Louis of France, Duc d'Anjou, son of the Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne. He was then five years old. On September 1, 1715, he became Louis XV.

gentlemen of the Chamber and the two masters of the Wardrobe. The gallery was filled with courtiers richly dressed, and with many strangers. The audience was long." [1]

On the 13th of August the king gave a farewell audience to the same ambassador. "On Tuesday, the 13th of August (1715)," says Saint-Simon, "he made a violent effort, and gave a farewell audience to a sham Persian ambassador whom Pontchartrain had imposed upon him; this was the last public action of his life. The audience, which was long, fatigued the king. He resisted the desire for sleep which came over him, held the Finance Council, dined, had himself carried in his sedan-chair to the apartments of Madame de Maintenon, where a little concert was given. On leaving his cabinet, he stopped for the Duchesse de la Rochefoucauld, who presented to him the Duchesse de la Rocheguyon, her daughter-in-law, who was the last lady presented to him. She took her tabouret that evening at the king's grand supper, which was the last he ever gave." [2]

[1] Dangeau.

[2] Saint-Simon, II, p. 345.

XV

THE THEATER

NOTWITHSTANDING the fact that theatrical performances were given at the court nearly every week, there was no regular theater in the château during the reign of Louis XIV. The opera-house of Versailles was constructed in the reign of Louis XV, and was opened for the first time in 1770, at the marriage of the dauphin and the Archduchess Marie Antoinette.

Under Louis XIV, performances were given usually in temporary theaters, erected in various apartments of the palace. Sometimes there were open-air performances in the marble courtyard, in the gardens, or at the Great Stables, and in the last years of the reign a hall of comedy was constructed on the ground floor, between the south wing and the central portion of the château, where the vestibule of the court of the Princes is at the present time. Temporary theaters were also constructed at Trianon and at Marly.

There were two companies of players, one French, the other Italian. Of the latter the greatest actor was Biancolelli, who died in 1688. In 1697 the king sent the Italian comedians back to Italy; he found their plays too free, and, moreover, they had dared to satirize Madame de Maintenon. The French comedians had a narrow escape in 1703. They had played a coarse piece before the Duchesse de Bourgogne, and the king informed them that if they repeated the fault he would drive them away at once.

"In the month of July, 1682," says the *Mercure*, "the riding-school of the Great Stables was transformed into a theater for the performance of one of the best operas of Lulli. The king wished to see the new opera *Persée*, of which Quinault had written the words, and Lulli the music. It was decided to prepare a theater in the marble court. The weather, which had been bad for some days, suddenly became fine, and they profited by that to work actively at the theater; but on the day set for the performance, it rained hard. The king ordered a postponement of the spectacle, but the organizers of the fête, seeing that the king was annoyed, promised him that another theater would be ready that same evening in the riding-school of the Great Stables. In short, at eight o'clock, the riding-school, in which at noon they had been exercising horses, was transformed into a glittering theater. Orchestra, dais for the king, tribunes for the spectators, nothing was lacking. At the sides of the stage rose a veritable forest of orange-trees and trees of all kinds, and an immense number of lusters and candelabra furnished the illumination. The opera was perfectly executed; and the king, charmed with the music, said to Lulli that he had never heard anything of the sort which pleased him more. He complimented also Mlle. La Rochois, the celebrated singer, and Pécourt, the dancer." [1]

On other occasions operas were given in the riding-school of the Great Stables. On the 8th of January, 1685, they produced for the first time the opera *Roland* (Quinault and Lulli). The king went at six o'clock, and did not leave until ten. Having returned to the château, he gave a supper in his apartments to the royal family and to some ladies. *Roland* was produced five times. On the 5th of March of the same year, the opera *Armide* (Quinault and Lulli) was given in the riding-school. The king had not yet seen it, because the first

[1] Le Mercure Galant, 1682.

performance had taken place in 1683, the year of the queen's death. He found the opera very beautiful.

Comedies, operas, and ballets were given very frequently at Trianon and at Marly. Dangeau mentions the ballet given at Trianon in February, 1689: "On the 7th of February, at three in the afternoon, the king, Monseigneur, and the princesses went to Trianon. The King and Queen of England arrived shortly after. The two kings talked together, and the queen played cards with Monsieur against Mmes. de Ventadour and d'Epinoy. Mme. la Dauphine arrived at half-past five, and they entered at an early hour into the hall of the ballet. The Queen of England was seated between the two kings in the tribune. Mmes. de Sussex, de Baucley, and de Montecuculli were there also with Madame de Maintenon." On the 16th of February, 1689, the opera *Thétis et Pélée* was given at Trianon. The king and the dauphine were delighted with the music, and complimented the author, Colasse. The operas *Atys* (Quinault and Lulli) and *Enée et Lavinie* (Fontenelle and Colasse) were performed more than once at Trianon, and during the fêtes at the marriage of the Duc de Bourgogne, in 1697, Destouches's opera *Issé* was given there. "The 17th of December (1697)," says Dangeau, "the king left Versailles at four o'clock to go to Trianon. He had in his carriage Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne and Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne. At Trianon all the court gambled until the arrival of the King and Queen of England. When they came, the king took them to the theater. When all were seated, a magnificent collation was served. Then the opera commenced; it was *Issé,* with which the king was well pleased. The spectacle was very beautiful."

At Marly, on the 21st of August, 1685, before supper, the *Sicilien* of Molière was given in a temporary theater. On the 4th of September, 1689, in the salon of Marly, the comedy-ballet of the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* was performed.

The king was seated in the balcony, which surrounded the salon. Concerts became fashionable in 1700 at Marly as at Versailles.

In theatrical matters, as in everything else, Madame de Maintenon took a hand. In 1688 she ordered Racine to write a tragedy for St. Cyr. At a conference between the king and herself and Racine on the 18th of February, the subject chosen was Esther and Ahasuerus. Racine set to work, and later read his piece, act by act, to Madame de Maintenon and the king. The tragedy was to be acted by the girls of St. Cyr. Two private performances were given in the apartments of Madame de Maintenon; and finally, on the 26th of January, 1689, all the court went to St. Cyr to witness the first representation. In *Esther* allusions to Madame de Maintenon abounded; her elevation, her power, were plainly indicated, and escaped no one. The court could read between the lines. The piece had a great success. After *Esther,* they played *Athalie* at St. Cyr. Later came *Jonathan,* the author of which was Duché. The young actresses of St. Cyr were sometimes brought in the king's carriages to Versailles to recite the beautiful verses of Racine to His Majesty, always in the apartments of Madame de Maintenon.

With the coming of the Duchesse de Bourgogne, the grand cabinet of Madame de Maintenon became a theater. The young duchess was fond of acting, and it suited Madame de Maintenon exactly to have private performances in her apartments, where she could regulate the number of spectators, have the king constantly at hand and pleasantly entertained, and all dangerous people shut out. On the 12th of January, 1697, *Esther* was given, the Duchesse de Bourgogne taking the rôle of a little Israelite. On the 6th of December of the following year there was a little play in which the Duc de Bourgogne represented Apollo, and the duchess and her ladies the nine Muses. At Fontainebleau, in the apartments of

Madame de Maintenon, the Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne, the Duchesse de Guiche, Mme. d'Heudicourt, and some others, gave *Les Plaideurs* before the king. In 1699, in the grand cabinet of Madame de Maintenon at Versailles, they gave *Les Précieuses Ridicules.* "Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, M. le Duc d'Orléans, the Comte and Comtesse d'Ayen, the young Comte de Noailles, and Mlle. de Melun took the principal parts, in magnificent costumes. The old Baron, an excellent actor, trained them and played with them, and some servants of M. de Noailles. There were but forty spectators — the king, Madame de Maintenon, Monseigneur, the two princes his sons, Mme. la Princesse de Conti, M. du Maine, Madame de Noailles, and some ladies of the palace; only two or three courtiers. Madame de Maintenon made an invitation to these spectacles a favor much prized." [1]

The death of the Duchesse de Bourgogne, in 1712, brought these diversions to an end. But the king, sad and serious, was then more than ever at the apartments of Madame de Maintenon, where nothing could fill the void left by the disappearance of the charming dauphine. Madame de Maintenon organized a new theater, with the king's musicians as the actors, to give the plays of Molière. He was always Louis's favorite; with him the pleasures of the reign had been inaugurated, with him they were to close. The king, accustomed to the acting of Molière himself, could not endure the players of the Comédie Française, who had lost the tradition, and interpreted their rôles badly, so badly at Fontainebleau in 1700, in *L'Avare,* that His Majesty rose and went out. In 1712 Louis himself gave to his musicians the manner and gestures of Molière. They played the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme,* to the king's satisfaction, on the 21st of December at Versailles, in the grand cabinet of Madame de Maintenon. This was the first of a series of performances,

[1] Saint-Simon, III, p. 340.

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Jean Baptiste Poquelin, Molière

a revival of Molière, extending through the last three years of the king's life. In 1713 they gave, at Versailles, the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* in January; in February, *George Dandin;* in March, *L'Avare;* at Marly, in August, *Le Médecin Malgré Lui.* In 1714, at Versailles, in January and February, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme;* at Fontainebleau, in September, *L'Avare, Les Fâcheux, Le Mariage Forcé,* and in October, *L'Étourdi* and *L'École des Maris.* In 1715, at Versailles, in January, *M. de Pourceaugnac;* in March, *Le Médecin Malgré Lui;* at Marly, in May, *George Dandin;* in June, *Le Médecin Malgré Lui* and *L'Ecole des Maris;* in July, *Le Mariage Forcé. Le Mariage Forcé,* on the 12th of July, 1715, was the last play seen by Louis XIV.

XVI

THE SEAMY SIDE

AMID the magnificence of Versailles there was much discomfort. In winter people froze in those vast salons of marble and gold. The blazing logs in the fireplaces were not sufficient to warm them, and there was no means at all of heating the grand gallery. On the 5th of March, 1695, the Palatine wrote: "It is so cold here that at the king's table wine as well as water froze in the glasses." In the terrible winter of 1709 Saint-Simon states that "the violence of the cold was such that the strongest elixirs and the most spirituous liquors broke their bottles in cupboards of rooms with fires in them, in several parts of the Château of Versailles. As I was supping one evening with the Duc de Villeroi, I saw bottles that had come from a well-heated kitchen, and that had been put on the chimney-piece of this room, so frozen that pieces of ice fell into our glasses as we poured from them." The king himself caught cold in changing his wig in his inner cabinet. Madame de Maintenon had a large arm-chair with a high back, top, and sides, to shield her from drafts, and in which she sat as in a sentry-box.

For the courtiers the fatigue of standing continually has already been mentioned. To ride in the king's carriage on the court journeys did not always bring joy. "When the king traveled, his coach was always full of women — his daughters, his daughters-in-law, sometimes Madame, and

other ladies when there was room. In the coach during his journeys there were always all sorts of things to eat, as meat, pastry, fruit. A quarter of a league was not passed over before the king asked if somebody would not eat. He never ate anything between meals himself, not even fruit, but he was pleased by seeing others do so. You were obliged to be hungry, merry, and to eat with appetite; and yet after this, if you supped with him at table the same day, you were compelled to eat with as good a countenance as though you had tasted nothing since the previous night. He was as inconsiderate in other and more delicate matters; and ladies, in his long drives and stations, had often occasion to curse him. The Duchesse de Chevreuse once rode all the way from Versailles to Fontainebleau in such extremity that several times she was well-nigh losing consciousness. The king, who was fond of air, liked all the windows of the coach to be lowered. He would have been much displeased had any lady drawn a curtain for protection against sun, wind, or cold. No inconvenience or incommodity was allowed to be even perceived; and the king always went very quickly, most frequently with relays. To faint was a fault past hope of pardon."[1] Madame herself mentions the inconvenience she experienced when driving with the king: "I have seen in traveling such clouds of dust that we could hardly see each other in the coach, and yet the king never ordered the horsemen to keep back."

The king had a spy system, both at Versailles and Marly, that was mean and petty, but by means of it he received information about the doings of his courtiers which appalled them. It gave him a mysterious omniscience. They chafed under a surveillance which they suspected and could not see. The opening of letters at the post-office was a worse evil. "The promptitude and dexterity with which they were

[1] Saint-Simon, III, p. 16.

opened passes understanding. The king saw extracts from all the letters in which there were passages that the chiefs of the post-office, and the minister who governed it, thought ought to go before him. Thus the chiefs of the post, nay, the principal clerks, were in a position to suppose what they pleased and against whom they pleased. A word of contempt against the king or the government was enough. Many people, justly or unjustly, were more or less ruined, and always without resource. The secret was impenetrable." [1] In the face of such a condition of abuse of power, one can understand the remark of the Palatine: "Since the time of the king it has not been the custom for ladies to talk of the affairs of state."

At Versailles, in spite of the polish, the dignity, and the refinement of manners, there was coarseness, and human nature broke loose at times from beneath the weight of etiquette, and found relief in horse-play. Take the case of Madame Panache. "She was a little and very old creature, with lips and eyes so disfigured that they were painful to look upon; a species of beggar who had obtained a footing at court from being half-witted, who was now at the supper of the king, now at the dinner of Monseigneur, or at other places, where everybody amused themselves by tormenting her. She in turn abused the company, in order to cause diversion, but sometimes rated them very seriously and with strong words, which delighted still more. Some gave her a pistole or a crown, and others a fillip or a smack in the face, which put her in fury, because with her bleared eyes, not being able to see to the end of her nose, she could not tell who struck her. She was, in a word, the pastime of the court." [2] The Princesse d'Harcourt was another of the same type. "The Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne continually played off pranks upon her. They put, one day, fire-crackers all along the avenue at

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 365.

[2] Idem, I, p. 98.

Marly that led to the Perspective, where she lodged. She was horribly afraid of everything. The duke and duchess bribed two porters to be ready to take her into the mischief. When she was right in the middle of the avenue, the crackers began to go off, and she to cry aloud for mercy; the chairmen set her down and ran. There she was, struggling in her chair, furiously enough to upset it, and yelling like a demon. At this the company, that had gathered at the door of the château to see the fun, ran to her assistance, in order to have the pleasure of enjoying the scene more fully. Thereupon she set to abusing everybody right and left, commencing with the Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne. At another time M. de Bourgogne put a cracker under her chair in the salon, where she was playing *piquet*. As he was about to set fire to it, some charitable soul warned him that it would maim her, and he desisted. Sometimes, and these scenes were always at Marly, they sent about twenty Swiss guards with drums into her chamber, who roused her from her first sleep by their horrid din. Once they waited until very late for her to go to bed and to sleep. She lodged not far from the post of the captain of the Guards, who was at that time the Maréchal de Lorges. It had snowed very hard and had frozen. Madame de Bourgogne and her suite gathered snow from the terrace which was on a level with their lodgings, and in order to be better supplied, waked up to assist them the maréchal's people, who did not let them lack ammunition. Then, with a false key and lights, they slipped gently into the chamber of the Princesse d'Harcourt; and suddenly drawing the curtains of her bed, pelted her amain with snowballs. Waking up with a start, bruised and stifled in snow, with which even her ears were filled, with disheveled hair, yelling at the top of her voice, and wriggling like an eel, without knowing where to hide, she formed a spectacle that diverted people for more than half an hour; so that at last the nymph swam in her bed,

from which the water flowed everywhere, slushing all the chamber. It was enough to make one die of laughter. On the morrow she sulked, and was more than ever laughed at for her pains." [1] Owing to her character and temper and her disgusting manners, no one had any respect for the Princesse d'Harcourt, and such scenes were, therefore, possible.

There was less wit and agreeable conversation in the court of Versailles than there had been previously in that of St. Germain. The Palatine tells us that sometimes at the king's supper, although there were twenty or thirty ladies at table, hardly any one said a word, unless His Majesty addressed a remark to a particular individual. They were afraid of compromising themselves. The rigidity of etiquette and the passion for gambling at the court assemblies had also made sad inroads on wit and conversation. The king perceived the change. He tried to revive the polished and witty assemblies of Anne of Austria, and held a special assembly at Fontainebleau on the 24th of September, 1707. "It was magnificent," says the *Mercure,* "and all the princesses and the ladies were covered with jewels. Nowhere could more jewels be seen together." But the assembly failed to fulfil the object. There were more jewels than wit, and it was necessary to return to the *appartement* and to play.

And finally, in the bad years of the War of the Spanish Succession, disaster knocked at the door. Saint-Simon has painted the anxiety when Lille was besieged: "The agitation was extreme. The king demanded news of the siege of his courtiers, and could not understand why no couriers arrived. It was generally expected that some decisive battle had been fought. Each day increased the uneasiness. The princes and the principal noblemen of the court were with the army. Every one at Versailles feared for the safety of a relative or friend. Prayers were offered everywhere. Mme. la Duch-

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 257.

esse de Bourgogne passed whole nights in the chapel, when people thought her in bed, and drove her women to despair. Following her example, ladies who had husbands at the army stirred not from the churches. Gaming, conversation ceased. Fear was painted upon every face, and perceived in every speech, without shame. If a horse passed a little quickly, everybody ran without knowing where. The apartments of Chamillart were crowded with lackeys, even into the street, sent by people desiring to be informed of the moment that a courier arrived; and this terror and uncertainty lasted nearly a month."

Thus at Versailles people were not always well bred, wit did not always sparkle, cold and care could not always be kept out.

XVII

THE COURT AND PARIS

ON no road in France was there so much travel as on that between Paris and Versailles; on no other highway in Europe could so many splendid equipages be seen. The king, however, went seldom to his capital. We find him there on the 30th of January, 1687, having gone to see the statue erected to him by the Duc de la Feuillade. "His Majesty went to mass at Notre Dame," says Dangeau, "and did not wish to have soldiers on line in the streets, in order that the people might move about more freely. Troops were placed only at Notre Dame and at the Hôtel de Ville, so that the carriages could approach without confusion. From Notre Dame the king went to the Hôtel de Ville, where they gave him a magnificent dinner; there were fifty-five covers. All the princes of the blood, the king's children, and the ladies who accompanied him, dined with the king. The *prévôt des marchands* served the king at table; his wife served Mme. la Dauphine. Never before had the king dined at the Hôtel de Ville. The people of Paris displayed the greatest joy at seeing the king. All the shops were closed; fountains of wine ran, and there were illuminations at night. On leaving the Hôtel de Ville, the king went to the Place des Victoires, where he alighted from his carriage, and examined the statue erected by M. de la Feuillade.[1] Then he drove to the Tuileries. Mme. la Dau-

[1] M. de la Feuillade was an arrant sycophant. He surrounded this statue with lamps which he wished to burn all night. The king prohibited this, remarking that lamps of that sort should be only in churches.

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Louis XIV Visiting the Manufactory of the Gobelins

phine accompanied him, and from the balcony threw money to the people."

In 1701 Louis XIV was at Paris on three occasions. On the 19th of May of that year he visited the church of Les Invalides; on the 14th of July he returned to inspect the establishment; and on the 20th of July he went to Notre Dame to see the model of the altar which he wished to erect there. In 1702 he made the stations of the jubilee in Paris on the 6th and 7th of April; and in 1706 he heard mass in the church of Les Invalides, on the 28th of August, and gave great and well-merited praise to Mansart.

Monseigneur went frequently to Paris, to the Opera and to the fair of St. Germain. "Monseigneur had, I know not how," says Saint-Simon, "much endeared himself to the common people of Paris, and this sentiment soon gained the provinces." In 1701, when Monseigneur had an attack of apoplexy from which he came near dying, the fish-women of Paris sent a deputation to congratulate him on his convalescence. He was at Versailles at the time. "Paris loved Monseigneur, perhaps because he went often to the Opera. The fish-fags of the Halles thought it would be proper to exhibit their affection, and deputed four stout gossips to wait upon him. They were admitted. One of them took him round the neck and kissed him on both cheeks; the others kissed his hand. They were all very well received. Bontemps showed them over the apartments, and treated them to a dinner. Monseigneur gave them some money, and the king did also. They determined not to remain in debt, and had a fine *Te Deum* sung at St. Eustache, and then feasted." [1]

The Duchesse de Bourgogne amused herself much when she went to Paris. According to the *Mercure,* she was there at the fair on the 18th of August, 1698, "in a gray dress decked with emeralds, and wearing a splendid necklace of

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 206.

diamonds." She bought ribbons and jewels, and watched the dancers on the tight-rope and the marionettes. In March, 1699, she visited the shops and bought presents for Monseigneur. Some years later she came again, during the fêtes which followed the birth of her son. "The city gave a firework fête upon the river, that Monseigneur, the princes his sons, and Mme. la Duchesse de Bourgogne, with many ladies and courtiers, came to see from the windows of the Louvre." [1]

Monsieur and Madame came sometimes to make a short stay at the Palais Royal, which was their town house. Their son, the Duc de Chartres, was very fond of Paris. He could pursue his pleasures there much better than under the eyes of the king.

The courtiers came and went continually. By day their heavy coaches rumbled over the cobbles on the Avenue de Paris; by night the torches of their grooms lighted the white fronts of the houses along the road. The people of Paris came often to Versailles. The rich bourgeoisie had their own equipages. For other people there were coaches that left the Rue St. Nicaise twice a day for Versailles, the fare being twenty-five sous. In the same street also there were saddle-horses and post-chaises. Whenever a fête was held at Versailles the Parisians were on hand in large numbers, and crowded to every point of view.

The Grand Monarch was very willing that Paris should come to admire the splendors of Versailles, but he was displeased if his courtiers showed too open an inclination for the capital. If any of them appeared to abandon the court for Paris, they incurred disgrace. The king remained throughout his life bitter against Paris for the riots and humiliations he had seen and experienced there in his youth. The unpleasant associations connected with his early life there, the fact that whenever he rode or drove in the narrow streets of

[1] Saint-Simon, I, p. 291.

Paris he was surrounded by a crowd, and his love of hunting, and of walking in the open air, all combined to fix him, as soon as he became his own master, at St. Germain. His increasing desire to collect the nobility about him, that he might effectually destroy the remnants of their authority, established him later at Versailles. As the central figure in the new world of Versailles, he fascinated and awed Paris, and on the rare occasions when he went there, majestic in magnificence, he produced a profound impression.

He never lost but once his imposing and haughty attitude toward his capital. It was during the most critical period of the War of the Spanish Succession. " People remarked much at Fontainebleau, just as Lille was invested, that, the City of Paris coming to harangue the king on the occasion of the oath taken by Bignon, the new *prévôt des marchands,* His Majesty replied not only with kindness, but that he made use of the term ' gratitude for his good city,' and that in doing so he lost countenance,— two things which during all his reign had never escaped him." [1]

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 39.

XVIII

THE COURT AND THE PEOPLE

FROM 1661 to 1685, owing to the financial reforms of Colbert, the French peasant found his load less heavy. The villain tax and the salt tax had been reduced, and by developing the resources and industries of the country, the minister had raised the net revenue from 32,000,000 livres in 1661 to 87,000,000 livres in 1683. But however fast Colbert might increase resources, the expenditures of the Sun King more than kept pace, amounting in 1683 to nearly 100,000,000 livres for the various departments of the government. The death of Colbert and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes were severe blows to commercial prosperity, and Colbert's successors could invent nothing but new taxes. From 1685 to 1700 the burdens of the people increased; from 1700 to 1713, during the War of the Spanish Succession, they became so great that the peasants cried out in their misery.

In 1709, "Monseigneur, arriving and returning from the Opera, was assailed by the populace and by women in great numbers, crying, 'Bread! bread!' so that he was afraid, even in the midst of his guards, who did not dare to disperse the people for fear of worse happening. He got away by throwing money to the people and promising wonders; but as the wonders did not follow, he no longer dared to go to Paris," [1] He met the same thing elsewhere. Dangeau tells us, on May

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 63.

2, 1709, that "Monseigneur, hunting the wolf, found in the country a crowd of peasants, and above all women, who cried loudly, complaining of the price of bread, which increased daily. Monseigneur gave money to these unfortunate people." "The king himself," says Saint-Simon, "from his windows, heard the people of Versailles crying aloud in the street. They uttered complaints, sharp and but little measured, against the government."

On the 20th of August, 1709, there was a bread riot in Paris. "The idle and poor had been employed to level a rather large hillock which remained upon the Boulevard, between the Portes St. Denis and St. Martin; and for all pay, bread in small quantities was distributed to these workers. It happened that on Tuesday morning, the 20th of August, there was no bread for a large number of these people. A woman amongst others cried out at this, which excited the rest to do likewise. The archers appointed to watch over these laborers threatened the woman; she only cried the louder; thereupon the archers seized her, and indiscreetly put her in an adjoining pillory. In a moment all her companions ran to her aid, pulled down the pillory, and scoured the streets, pillaging the bakers and pastry-cooks. One by one the shops closed. The disorder increased and spread through the neighboring streets; no harm was done to anybody, but the cry was, 'Bread! bread!' and bread was seized everywhere. It so fell out that the Maréchal de Boufflers, who little thought what was happening, was in the neighborhood, calling upon his notary. Surprised at the fright he saw everywhere, and learning the cause, he wished himself to appease it. Accompanied by the Duc de Grammont, he directed himself toward the scene of the disturbance, although advised not to do so. When he arrived at the top of the Rue St. Denis, the crowd and the tumult made him judge that it would be best to alight from his coach. He advanced, there-

fore, on foot with the Duc de Grammont among the furious and infinite crowd of people, of whom he asked the cause of this uproar, promised them bread, spoke his best with gentleness but firmness, and remonstrated with them. He was listened to. Cries, several times repeated, of 'Vive M. le Maréchal de Boufflers!' burst from the crowd. He walked thus with M. de Grammont all along the Rue aux Ours and the neighboring streets, into the very center of the sedition, in fact. The people begged him to represent their misery to the king, and to obtain for them some food. He promised this, and upon his word being given, all were appeased, and all dispersed with thanks and fresh acclamations of 'Vive M. le Maréchal de Boufflers!' He did a real service that day. D'Argenson had marched to the spot with troops, and had it not been for the maréchal, blood would have been spilled, and things might have gone very far. M. de Boufflers had scarcely reached his own house in the Place Royale when he was informed that the sedition had broken out with even greater force in the Faubourg St. Antoine. He ran there immediately, with the Duc de Grammont, and appeased it as he had appeased the other. He returned to his own house to eat a mouthful or two, and then set out for Versailles. Scarcely had he left the Place Royale when the people in the streets cried to him to have pity on them and to get them some bread, always with 'Vive M. le Maréchal de Boufflers!' He was conducted thus as far as the quay of the Louvre. On arriving at Versailles, he went straight to the king, told him what had occurred, and was much thanked. He was even offered by the king the command of Paris, troops, citizens, police, and all; but this he declined, Paris, as he said, having already a governor and proper officers to conduct its affairs. Immediately after, the supply of bread was carefully looked to. Paris was filled with patrols, perhaps with too many,

The Théâtre d'Eau, Versailles

but they succeeded so well that no fresh disturbances took place." [1]

If there was much destitution in Paris, there was more in the provinces. Taine has estimated that in 1715 some six millions of people in France were perishing with hunger. Few passages are more often quoted, in connection with the peasants under the Old Régime, than those lines of La Bruyère: "Certain savage-looking beings, male and female, are seen in the country, black, livid, and sunburnt, and belonging to the soil which they dig and grub with invincible stubbornness. They seem capable of articulation, and when they stand erect, they display human lineaments. They are, in fact, men. They retire at night into their dens, where they live on black bread, water, and roots. They spare other human beings the trouble of sowing, plowing, and harvesting, and thus should not be in want of the bread they have planted." While to a certain degree, and in certain localities, La Bruyère's words were without exaggeration, to apply his picture to France at large would be a serious error. There was misery and suffering enough among the peasants, without question, but had the majority of them been in the situation depicted by La Bruyère, the court would have collapsed, and the machinery of the government would have broken down long before it did. From people who have nothing but "dens, black bread, water, and roots," no king can draw millions of livres. Those millions the king and the nobles drew, and continued to draw long after Louis XIV.

France was prosperous in 1675, but not rich enough to support the splendor of a Sun King and make war at the same time. The expenditures of the Grand Monarch were very great, but the cost of Versailles and Marly was, after all, a small part of the whole. In 1715 there was hardly a noble

[1] Saint-Simon, II, p. 64.

family at court that was not living entirely on the king's money, and the cost of supporting the nobility crippled the king and crushed the peasants. In 1710 the poverty of the people came to the surface even at Versailles, and the beggars became so numerous in the vestibules and corridors of the palace that the king appointed certain Swiss guards to take them up and send them to the hospital.

Louis was led away by false principles. In the prosperous years of Colbert's administration, the monarch reduced and remitted various taxes; but having set up a huge royal establishment, he felt bound to maintain it when the bad years came, and, furthermore, the situation was such that he was forced to maintain a large part of the nobility whether he would or not. When Louvois proposed a heavy measure of taxation, the king hesitated; and when the minister remarked that it was only necessary to use a little severity, the monarch interrupted him by saying, " I do not wish any one to use my people severely." He probably did not, but they were used severely none the less.

And they, burdened and oppressed, bent their backs to the plow, still believing that their first duty was to seek the splendor of Louis and his magnificence, because " the nation entire resided in the person of the king."

XIX

THE END OF THE REIGN

DURING a promenade at Marly in January, 1715, Louis XIV complained of the cold. He had never done so before, not even in the bitter winter of 1709. In the preceding ten years the old king had experienced many misfortunes and many sorrows. His troops had met defeat after defeat at the hands of the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene; his prestige had been sadly impaired, his pride severely wounded, his finances seriously crippled; placards "the most daring, the most unmeasured, against his person and his government," had appeared in Paris, pasted at night upon the gates, the churches, the statues; death had struck down his son and heir, and then, in quick succession, his talented grandson and his beloved granddaughter-in-law, the Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne, and their little son, the Duc de Bretagne, and later the Duc de Berry; he himself had been brought to the brink of ruin. But the old king, abating nothing of his stately bearing, faced his disasters with the firmness and dignity which had distinguished him throughout his life; and when, at the last, it seemed that only a miracle could keep the enemy out of Paris, while his courtiers were urging him to retire to Blois, he sent Villars to the combat, declaring that if fortune failed, he himself would rally the troops that remained, march to St. Quentin, and die King of France. Fortune, not daring, apparently, to mock him further, returned to him at Denain.

But these things had left their stamp, hidden and heavy, upon that majesty which Saint-Simon termed a "terror," and though, at the beginning of 1715, the Grand Monarch still bore his seventy-six years well, yet he complained of the cold. It was the first public symptom of his physical decline; his loss of appetite was the second. "His appetite, which had always been good and uniform, very considerably diminished," says Saint-Simon. "Even foreign countries became aware of this. Bets were laid in London that his life would not last beyond the first of September, that is to say, about three months, and although the king wished to know everything, it may be imagined that nobody was very eager to make him acquainted with this news. He used to have the Dutch papers read to him in private by Torcy, often after the council. One day as Torcy was reading, coming unexpectedly, for he had not examined the paper, upon the account of these bets, he stopped, stammered, and skipped it. The king, who easily perceived this, asked him the cause of his embarrassment; what he was passing over, and why he omitted it. Torcy blushed to the very whites of his eyes, and said that it was a piece of impertinence unworthy of being read. The king insisted; Torcy also; but at last thoroughly confused, he could not resist the reiterated command he received, and read the whole account of the bets. The king pretended not to be touched by it, but he was, and profoundly, so that, on sitting down at dinner immediately afterward, he could not keep himself from speaking of it, though without mentioning the gazette. This was at Marly, and by chance I was there that day. The king looked at me as at the others, as though asking for a reply. I took good care not to open my mouth, and lowered my eyes. Cheverny was not so prudent, but made a long and ill-timed rhapsody upon similar reports that had come to Copenhagen from Vienna while he was ambassador at the former place seventeen or eighteen years be-

Trianon in the time of Louis XIV

fore. The king allowed him to say on, but did not take the bait. He appeared touched, but like a man who does not wish to seem so. It could be seen that he did all he could to eat, and to show that he ate with appetite; but it was also seen that the mouthfuls loitered on their way. This trifle did not fail to augment the circumspection of the court, above all of those who by their position had reason to be more attentive than the rest. It was reported that an aide-de-camp of Lord Stair, who was then English ambassador at our court, and very much disliked for his insolent bearing and troublesome ways, had caused these bets by what he had said in England respecting the health of the king. Stair, when told this, was much grieved, and said it was a scoundrel he had dismissed. . . .

"On Friday, the 9th of August, 1715, the king hunted the stag after dinner, driving himself as usual. It was for the last time. Upon his return he appeared much knocked up. There was a grand concert in the evening in Madame de Maintenon's apartment. On Saturday, the 10th of August, he walked before dinner in his gardens at Marly; he returned to Versailles about six o'clock in the evening, and never again saw that strange work of his hands. In the evening he worked with the chancellor in Madame de Maintenon's apartment, and appeared to everybody very ill. On Sunday, the 11th of August, he held the Council of State, and walked after dinner to Trianon, nevermore to go out again during life. On Monday, the 12th of August, he took medicine as usual. It was known that he complained of sciatica in the leg and thigh. He had never before had sciatica, and for a long time no touch of gout. In the evening there was a little concert in Madame de Maintenon's rooms. This was the last time in his life that he walked alone. On Tuesday, the 13th of August, he made a violent effort and gave a farewell audience to the Persian ambassador whom

Pontchartrain had imposed upon him; this was the last public action of his life. . . .

"For more than a year the health of the king had diminished. His valets noticed this first, and followed the progress of the malady, without one of them daring to open his mouth. M. du Maine saw it, and Madame de Maintenon also; but they did nothing. Fagon, the chief physician, much fallen off in mind and body, was the only one of the king's intimates who saw nothing. Maréchal, also chief physician, spoke to Fagon several times, but was always harshly repulsed. Pressed at last by his duty and his attachment, he made bold one morning toward Whitsuntide to go to Madame de Maintenon. He told her what he saw and how grossly Fagon was mistaken. He assured her that the king, whose pulse he had often felt, had had for some time a slow internal fever; that his constitution was so good that with remedies and attention all would go well, but that if the malady were allowed to grow, there would no longer be any resource. Madame de Maintenon grew angry, and all he obtained for his zeal was her anger. She said that only the personal enemies of Fagon could find fault with his opinion upon the king's health, concerning which the capacity, the application, the experience of Fagon could not be deceived. The best of it is that Maréchal, who had formerly operated upon Fagon for the stone, had been appointed chief surgeon by him, and they had always lived on the best of terms. Maréchal, annoyed as he related to me, could do nothing more, and began from that time to lament the death of his master. Fagon was in fact the first physician in Europe, but for a long time his health had not permitted him to maintain his experience, and the high point of authority to which his capacity and his favor had carried him had at last spoiled him. He would not hear reason, or submit to reply; and continued to treat the king as he had treated him in earlier years, and killed him by his obstinacy. The

gout, of which the king had had long attacks, induced Fagon to swaddle him, so to say, every night in a heap of feather pillows, which made him sweat to such an extent that it was necessary in the morning to rub him down and change his linen before the grand chamberlain and the first gentleman of the Chamber could enter. For many years he had drunk nothing but Burgundy wine, half mixed with water. . . . During the last year of his life, as he became more and more costive, Fagon made him eat at the commencement of his repasts many iced fruits, that is to say, mulberries, melons, and figs, and at his dessert many other fruits. . . . So much water and so much fruit, unconnected by anything spirituous, turned his blood into gangrene; while those forced night-sweats diminished its strength and impoverished it. And thus his death was caused, as was seen by the opening of his body; the organs were found in such good and healthy condition that there is reason to believe he would have lived beyond his hundredth year. Remedies were not thought of until it was no longer time, because Fagon would never believe him ill, nor would Madame de Maintenon. Amidst all this, the king felt his state before they perceived it, and said so sometimes to his valets. Fagon always reassured him, but did nothing. The king was contented with what was said to him, without being persuaded; his friendship for Fagon restrained him, and Madame de Maintenon still more.

"On Wednesday, the 14th of August, the king was carried to the chapel for the last time to hear mass. He held the Council of State, ate a meat dinner, and had music in Madame de Maintenon's apartments. He supped in his chamber, where the court saw him as at his dinner; afterward he was with the royal family a short time in his cabinet, and went to bed a little after ten. On Thursday, the 15th of August, the Festival of the Assumption, he heard mass in his bed. The night had been disturbed and bad. He dined in

his bed, the courtiers being present, rose at five o'clock, and was carried to Madame de Maintenon's, where there was music. He supped and went to bed as on the previous evening. As long as he could sit up he did the same. On Friday, the 16th of August, the night had been no better; much thirst and drink. The king ordered no one to enter until ten o'clock. Mass and dinner in his bed as before; then he was carried to Madame de Maintenon's; he played cards with the ladies there, and afterward there was a grand concert. On Saturday, the 17th of August, the night was as the preceding. He held the Finance Council while in bed; saw people at his dinner; rose immedately after; gave audience in his cabinet to the general of the Order of Ste. Croix de la Brétonnerie; and passed to Madame de Maintenon's, where he worked with the chancellor. At night Fagon slept for the first time in the king's chamber. Sunday, the 18th of August, passed like the preceding days. Fagon pretended that there had been no fever. The king held a Council of State before and after his dinner; worked afterward upon the fortifications with Pelletier; then passed to Madame de Maintenon's, where there was music.

"Monday, the 19th, and Tuesday, the 20th of August, passed much as the previous days, except that on the 20th the king supped in his dressing-gown, seated in an arm-chair, and after that evening he never left his bedchamber or dressed himself again. That same day Madame de Saint-Simon, whom I had pressed to return, came back from the waters of Forges. The king, entering after supper into his cabinet, perceived her. He ordered his chair to be stopped; spoke to her very kindly upon her journey and her return; then had himself wheeled on by Blouin into the other cabinet. She was the last court lady to whom he spoke. I do not count those who were always near him, and who came to him when he could no longer leave his chamber. Madame de Saint-Simon

said to me in the evening that she should not have recognized the king if she had met him anywhere else.[1] Yet she had left Marly for Forges only on the 6th of July. On Wednesday, the 21st of August, four physicians saw the king, but took care to do nothing except to praise Fagon, who gave him cassia. For some days it had been perceived that he ate meat and even bread with difficulty; soup in larger quantity, very light hash, and eggs compensated him, but he ate very sparingly.

"On Thursday, the 22d of August, the king was still worse. He saw four other physicians, who, like the first four, did nothing but admire the learned and admirable treatment of Fagon, who made him take toward evening some Jesuit bark and water, and intended to give him ass's milk at night. This same day the king ordered the Duc de la Rochefoucauld to bring him his clothes on the morrow, in order that he might choose what he would wear upon leaving off the mourning he had worn for a son of Mme. la Duchesse de Lorraine. He had not been able to quit his chamber for some days; he could scarcely eat anything solid; his physician slept in his chamber; and yet he reckoned upon being cured, upon dressing himself again, and wished to choose his dress! Meanwhile, let me say that the state of the king, of which nobody was ignorant, had already changed M. le Duc d'Orléans's desert into a crowded city.[2]

"Friday, the 23d of August, the night was as usual, the morning also. The king worked with Père Tellier, who tried, but in vain, to make him fill up several benefices that were vacant; that is to say, Père Tellier wished to dispose of them himself, instead of leaving them to M. le Duc d'Orléans. Let me state at once that the more feeble the king grew, the more Père Tellier worried him, so as not to lose such a rich

[1] The king had grown very thin since the 1st of August.

[2] The Duc d'Orléans lodged in the south wing of the château.

prize, or miss the opportunity of securing fresh creatures for his service. But he could not succeed. The king declared that he had enough to render account of to God without charging himself with this nomination, and forbade Père Tellier to speak again upon the subject.

"On Saturday evening, the 24th of August, the king supped in his dressing-gown, in the presence of the courtiers, for the last time. I noticed that he could only swallow liquids, and that he was troubled if looked at. He could not finish his supper, and begged the courtiers to pass on, that is to say, go away. He went to bed, where his leg, on which were several black marks, was examined. It had grown worse lately and had given him much pain. He sent for Père Tellier and made confession. Confusion spread among the doctors at this. Milk and Jesuit bark and water had been tried and abandoned; now nobody knew what to try. The doctors admitted that they believed he had had a slow fever since Whitsuntide, and excused themselves for doing nothing on the ground that he did not wish for remedies.

"On Sunday, the 25th of August, no more mystery was made of the king's danger. Nevertheless, he expressly commanded that nothing should be changed in the usual order of this day, the Fête of St. Louis; that is to say, the drums and hautboys, assembled beneath his windows, should play their accustomed music as soon as he awoke, and that the twenty-four violins should play in the antechamber during his dinner. He worked afterward with the chancellor, who wrote under his dictation a codicil to his will, Madame de Maintenon being present. She and M. du Maine, who thought incessantly of themselves, did not consider that the king had done enough for them by his will. They wished to remedy this by a codicil, which showed how enormously they abused the king's weakness in this extremity, and to what an excess ambition carried them. By this codicil the king submitted all

the civil and military household of the future king to the Duc du Maine, and under his orders to the Maréchal de Villeroi; by this disposition, they became the sole masters of the person and dwelling-place of the young king, and of Paris, by the troops placed in their hands; so that the regent would be at their mercy and without authority. Soon after the chancellor left the king, Madame de Maintenon, who remained, sent for the ladies, and the musicians came at seven o'clock in the evening. The king fell asleep during the conversation of the ladies. He awoke, his brain confused, which frightened them and made them call the doctors. They found his pulse so bad that they did not hesitate to propose to him, his senses having returned, to take the sacrament without delay. Père Tellier was sent for; the musicians who had just prepared their books and instruments were dismissed, the ladies also; and in a quarter of an hour from that time the king made confession to Père Tellier, the Cardinal de Rohan, meanwhile, bringing the Holy Sacrament from the chapel, and sending for the curé and holy oils. Two of the king's chaplains, summoned by the cardinal, came, and seven or eight candlesticks were carried by valets. The cardinal said a word or two to the king upon this great and last action, during which the king appeared very firm and very penetrated with what he was doing. As soon as he had received the Holy Sacrament and the holy oils, everybody left the chamber except Madame de Maintenon and the chancellor. Immediately afterward, and this was rather strange, a kind of book or little tablet was placed upon the bed, the codicil was presented to the king, and at the bottom of it he wrote four or five lines, and restored the document to the chancellor." [1]

At this point it is best to leave Saint-Simon's account of the king's last days, and turn to that of Dangeau. Dangeau

[1] Saint-Simon, II, pp. 343–352.

was in the royal bedchamber on several occasions between the 26th of August and the 1st of September, but Saint-Simon was not.

" Monday, the 26th of August. Toward six o'clock in the morning, they examined the king's leg, in which they had made many incisions, some even to the bone. They found that the gangrene had increased to such an extent as to leave no doubt, even in the minds of those who wished most to flatter themselves, that it was working within, and that no remedy could avail. Madame de Maintenon was alone in the chamber, and on her knees at the foot of the bed, while they examined His Majesty. After the examination the king said that, since no remedy could save him, he demanded at least that he be allowed to die in peace. At noon His Majesty had the little dauphin brought into his chamber, and after embracing him, he said ' My darling, you are going to be a great king, but all your happiness will depend upon your submission to God and the care you take to succor your people. To attain that, avoid making war; that is the ruin of peoples. Do not follow the bad example I have given you in that respect. I have entered into war too lightly, and sustained it through vanity. Do not imitate me, but be a pacific prince, and let your chief work be to succor your subjects. Profit by the good education that Mme. la Duchesse de Ventadour gives you, obey her, and follow always, in order to serve God well, the counsels of Père Le Tellier, whom I give you for confessor.'

" ' As for you, madame,' he said to Madame de Ventadour, ' I thank you greatly for the care with which you have reared this child, and for the tender regard you have for him. I pray you to continue it, and I urge him to give you all possible marks of his gratitude.' Then he embraced the dauphin twice, and weeping, gave him his benediction. The little prince was carried away weeping by his governess, the

Duchesse de Ventadour; and this touching spectacle moved us all to tears.

" A moment after, the king sent for the Duc du Maine and the Comte de Toulouse, and spoke to them with closed doors. He did the same with the Duc d'Orléans, whom he had summoned from his apartment. At the moment that the prince was leaving the chamber, the king called him back for the second time.

" At half-past twelve the king heard mass in his chamber, with the same attention with which he heard it always, his eyes always open, and praying God with supreme earnestness. As the mass was about to begin, His Majesty called the Marquis de Torcy, Minister of State, and said a word to him. At the conclusion of the mass, he made the Cardinal de Rohan and the Cardinal de Bissy approach, and spoke to them for about a minute; and having finished with them, he spoke in a louder tone to all his officers who were in the *ruelle* or before the balustrade. We all approached his bed, and he said to us: ' Gentlemen, I thank you for your services. You have served me faithfully and sought to please me. I am sorry that I have not been able to recompense you better; the misfortunes of the last years have not permitted it. I leave you with regret. Serve the dauphin with the same affection with which you have served me. He is a child of five years, who may meet with reverses, because I remember having had to undergo much in my youth. I go, but the state lives always. Be faithful, and let your example be one for all my other subjects. Be united and in accord — that is the union and force of a state; and follow the orders which my nephew will give you. He is to govern the kingdom; I hope he will govern it well. I hope also that you will do your duty, and that you will sometimes remember me.' At these last words we were all in tears, and nothing was heard but sobs. His voice was not at all broken, and only slightly less strong than usual.

He sent then for the Duc d'Orléans, who asked those near him to leave the chamber, of whom I was one, and recommended Madame de Maintenon to him; and His Majesty afterward summoned Madame and all the princesses, who were followed by their ladies of honor. They were there but a moment, and I do not understand how the king was able to endure their lamentations and the cries that they made.[1]

"One must have seen the last moments of this great king to understand the Christian firmness and heroism with which he sustained the approach of death, that he knew was near and inevitable. Since eight o'clock this morning there has not been a moment when he has not done some action, illustrious, pious, or heroic, not as the ancient Romans who affected to brave death, but with a natural manner, as in the most ordinary actions of life, speaking to each only of those things pertaining to him, and with that eloquence that he had had always, and which appeared to be increased in his last hours. In short, however great he has been in the course of his glorious reign of seventy-two years, he seems still greater in his death. His presence of mind and his firmness have not left him for a moment, and in speaking with goodness and kindness to all to whom he wished to speak, he has preserved all his grandeur and majesty even to his last sigh.

"At two o'clock, Madame de Maintenon being alone in the king's chamber, His Majesty summoned the chancellor, and had him open his caskets and burn certain of his papers, and gave orders regarding others with the same presence of mind with which he was wont to give orders at the council. This work lasted about two hours. At six o'clock he had the chancellor return, and, in the presence of Madame de Maintenon, worked with him for about half an hour. . . . At ten

[1] "They retired by the cabinet, dead; and indeed the rumor spread weeping and crying very loudly, to Paris, and even to the provwhich caused some people to be- inces." Saint-Simon.
lieve outside that the king was

Louis XIV in 1706

in the evening they examined His Majesty's leg, and found that the gangrene had made no further progress since morning, and that the leg seemed even slightly better; and as the king's strength had appeared to return during the afternoon, a ray of hope came to those who wished to flatter themselves, but those who listened to reason had none.

"Tuesday evening, August 27th. The king's condition has been all day much the same as that of yesterday. His Majesty grows weaker, and has had some moments of unconsciousness. . . . In the afternoon, toward evening, he had Père Le Tellier summon the Comte de Pontchartrain, Secretary of State, to whom he said: 'As soon as I am dead, you will give the orders to have my heart taken to the Grand Jesuits, and placed there in the same manner as that of the late king, my father. I do not wish that there should be much expense.' He gave this order with the same tranquillity with which, in health, he would have ordered a fountain for Versailles or Marly. He had given orders in the morning that as soon as he was dead they should take the dauphin to Vincennes, and as the grand marshal of lodgings had never assigned the apartments in that château, where the court had not been for more than fifty years, His Majesty ordered them to take a plan of Vincennes from a place that he indicated, and give it to the grand marshal of lodgings to assist him in his work. In the evening the king said to Madame de Maintenon: 'I have always heard that it is difficult to die. As for myself, since I am now almost at that moment so formidable to men, I do not find that it will be difficult.' Certainly there are few examples where a man has faced death for so long a time with equal coolness and courage.

"Wednesday evening, August 28th. The night of the king has been like the preceding. At seven in the morning, he sent for Père Le Tellier, who had just left the bedchamber. This made great commotion in the château, for every one

thought that the king was in extremity. At that moment, seeing in one of the mirrors two of the *garçons* of the Chamber, who were weeping at the foot of the bed, the king said to them: 'Why do you weep? Is it because you thought me immortal? I have never believed myself to be so, and considering my age, you should have been prepared for a long time to lose me.' . . .

"Thursday, August 29th. They continued last night and to-day to give the king, every eight hours, the remedy of Brun,[1] whom they even brought into the bedchamber with the other doctors, each time that the king took it. It appeared for a short time that the elixir gave the king more strength; and as many people here are extreme in everything, above all the women, they looked upon Brun as a sort of angel sent from heaven to save the king, and wished to throw all the court doctors into the river. . . .

"Friday, August 30th. The king has been all day in drowsiness and with little consciousness. When his leg was examined this evening, they found that the gangrene had spread from the knee into the thigh. The king's constitution is so good that he still fights against death. He took ice, and drank water from time to time. In drinking he said some words, but so indistinctly that they could not be understood. Madame de Maintenon left at five o'clock for St. Cyr, never to return. . . .

"Saturday evening, August 31st. The king has been without consciousness nearly always throughout the day. His lucid moments have been very short, and his consciousness more mechanical than anything else. From the few words he has spoken, he has appeared impatient at not seeing the end of his long agony. The gangrene continues to make

[1] "A rustic heard of the extremity of the king, and came to Versailles with a remedy which he said would cure the gangrene." Saint-Simon.

progress, and yet death does not come to finish the work of destruction, so great is the force of his constitution.

"Sunday, September 1st, 1715. The king died this morning at a quarter past eight. He gave up his soul without any effort, as a candle that goes out." [1]

On the 9th of September, after vespers, the body of Louis XIV, which had been lying in state in the salon of Mercury, was placed in a coffin, and borne to the royal courtyard, where the funeral car, draped in black and silver, stood ready. The officers of the Household moved in the glare of the torches; the horses and the grooms of the Stables were half hidden in the gloom. An order or two; a clatter of hoofs; a responsive rumble of wheels; and the Grand Monarch was gone.

In such fashion the Sun King disappeared in the darkness, and with him ended the ideals and aspirations of an Age. He stood for the Seventeenth Century. But a new Century had come, smiling, mocking, skeptical, doubting all things, even the divinity of a king.

[1] Dangeau, II.

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